



Power and Joy: Celebrating Women by Robin Colodzin. See page 6 for more about Robin's collage art.

Creativity

That Darned Feeling

By Lynn Rosenbaum

(These are the lyrics to a song which I wrote in 1991. Imagine a Latin beat.)

I've got a feeling in my gut.
It's rumbling and grumbling and scooching about.
It could be hunger or it could be love,
it could be creativity.

The energy is brewing deep inside.
It's clawing and climbing up a slippery slide.
It's sending signals loud and clear
but shouting into a deaf ear.

Pay attention
to the sound it's making.
Pay attention
feel the ground quaking.

Feeling continues on page 4

How is a Bisexual Like an Artist?

By Annie Goglia

One definition of an artist is someone who sees the world from different perspectives, and through an art form communicates those perspectives to the people around him or her. Someone who sees outside the box. Who takes what is around him or her and then creates something unique. As a bisexual, I see the world from a different perspective from the straight mainstream culture and from the gay subculture. I'm neither gay nor straight, or maybe I'm both. How do I decide how to live my social and sexual life as an out bisexual? The few (but growing) successful models of a "bisexual life" that do exist are as varied as the people living them. What works for one bi doesn't necessarily work for the next. We can't agree on one defini-

Artist continues on page 4

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Local Bi News.....	3
Dance Project.....	5
Just Do It.....	5
Visual Poetry.....	6
Book Review.....	6
Poetry.....	7
Eye of the Beholder.....	8
Mixed Bag.....	9
Calendar.....	11-12

Volunteers of the Month

Gail

Robyn Ochs

Lynn Rosenbaum

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Kate Griffin

Denise

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Steph

John Vines

Elena

Anne

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more fabulous
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know who
you are!

BiWomen is published bi-
monthly.

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The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay people within the larger society.

Editor's Notes

I hope you enjoy this "Creativity" issue. Our writers and artists have taken on a variety of ways of looking at creativity. We have examples of photography, collage, dance, poetry, songwriting, and philosophical musings about the subject. It shows again how diverse our human expression really is. Enjoy.

Last issue we sent out a survey to our readers and we have been getting a fairly good response from you. If you still have it sitting on your desk somewhere, please take the time to fill it out and send it in. Along with trying to get a sense of what you like/dislike, want more or less of in *BiWomen*, we are also gleening information about bi women generally. BBWN has distributed surveys every few years and we will be analyzing some of the data in terms of any changes over time. We will let you know the results of the survey in the next issue, so please get your responses in as soon as you can.

BiWomen is the key way we keep in touch with our local members and with other bi women across the country and in other countries. As editor, I am constantly amazed at the range of responses we get to each theme and I am so grateful to the women who send in pieces of themselves to share with our readers.

I would like to encourage anyone who is in the local area who wants to become more involved with the newsletter to please let me know. There are always opportunities to write, even to write a regular column, or to take photographs of events. It would be great if someone was interested in concentrating on getting new advertisers for us, too. In the past we had quite a number of ads but I haven't had the energy to pursue getting new ones and it would be a solid source of income for *BiWomen* if someone had the time to put into this. Please contact me if you are interested in getting involved in any area of the newsletter. You can call me at 617-623-5535 or e-mail me at nellythrustmor@aol.com. 

NEXT IN *BiWOMEN*

The *BiWomen* theme for
April/May is:

Transitions

How has your life been changing lately, or over time? Is life completely different for you now than ten years ago? Body, mind, sexuality, home, spirituality, relationships, family, etc.....share your thoughts on the joys and stresses of change and transformation.

Deadline: March 9, 2001

FUTURE ISSUES IN 2001

*June/July
Biphobia ~ BiPositive*

PLEASE SUBMIT TO *BiWOMEN*!

Send articles, calendar entries, letters,
artwork, photos,
news, and views to:

BiWomen

P.O. Box 400639

Cambridge, MA 02140

or via e-mail to

NellyThrustmor@aol.com

*If you do not want your name
published, please tell us.*

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BBWN Serving the Community

BBWN volunteers joined Women's Services Coordinator Beth Hastie (front row at far left) on January 4th for the "Ladies' Night" serving at the Boston Living Center. This was the second month that BBWN members helped serve the meals for the Living Center's women clients and their friends and family.

On the first Tuesday of each month, BBWN members will be helping to serve at Ladies' Night. Call Ellyn at 617-623-5535 if you would like to know how to volunteer.



New Year = New Ideas

It's time for a BBWN gathering to assess who is doing what, and what sort of exciting events the organization would like to have happen in the new year. The newsletter needs ideas for themes, the bank balance needs some funds to be raised, and the members are chomping at the bit for some fun socials. Come on out to "2001: A BBWN Organizing Odyssey" on Thursday, March 1st at the Boston Living Center, 29 Stanhope Street in Boston. We'll gather at 6:30 p.m., order some pizza (please bring a few bucks to contribute towards this) from Bertucci's and eat and organize for a couple of hours. And as it happens to be Women's Night at Club Cafe just around the corner, those who are interested can make their way over for drinks and cruising. Come on out and help us create a bisexual millennium to remember! (Did she just say that?)

Local Bi Couple Gets National Recognition



US *Today* recently named Marshall Miller and Dorian Solot among its "People to Watch in 2001." We in the local Boston bi community agree. Miller and Solot are both out bis who have contributed to the local and national bi scene for quite some time and it is great to see them get recognition for their work. They are founders of the Alternatives to Marriage Project, a non-profit providing a voice for those in committed relationships (both same-sex and opposite-sex partnerships) but are not married. Check out their website at www.unmarried.org and sign up for their monthly e-mail updates.

Miller is also Fenway Community Health's BiHealth coordinator, the first *paid* bi activist we know of in the country. See the calendar on page 12 for details of the next BiHealth educator training. Congratulations to Marshall and Dorian for paving the way!!



The Violet Quill Award Established

InsightOutBooks.com, the online book club for LGBT readers, family, and friends is proud to establish the annual Violet Quill Award. InsightOut Books is committed to raising awareness of talented, new and emerging writers within the LGBT community. Choosing from five finalists annually, InsightOut members will vote and select the best new author of LGBT fiction offered from InsightOut. The winner of the Violet Quill Award will receive \$1000, as well as premiere profiling on the InsightOut Books site. The Violet Quill Award is named after the historical circle of writers, including Edmund White and Felice Picano, who contributed greatly to the rise of gay literature in the eighties and nineties. At a time when LGBT literature was still often harshly criticized and condemned, the Violet Quill allowed influential queer writers to offer each other stylistic and technical writing advice, along with support for their tremendous efforts. Visit www.insightoutbooks.com for more information.

Artist from page 1

tion of bisexuality, let alone what constitutes a bisexual life. It falls back on us to create a social life that's uniquely ours.

As an out bisexual, I don't fit into any existing template of set behavior. For the past fifteen years I have not assumed I would get married to a man, have a monogamous relationship, have children, buy a house, etc. I have also not assumed I would end up in a monogamous lesbian relationship, with or without the house and children. But I also have, at different times, thought I might do all or some of those things. That means a large degree of creativity is involved in figuring out how to live my life. I try out different living situations, different kinds of relationships, and then step back. What worked well there? What were problems? Is this way of living true to myself? Does it meet my needs as a feminist bisexual woman who wants a variety of good close friendships in her life? What does friendship mean to me? How important is sex in my life? How important is it to have sex with both men and women? Little has remained unquestioned. I must rely on my own thinking and the feedback of those closest to me, not on solutions of our mainstream culture(s).

There is a way in which being creative in one area in my life feeds creativity in others. If I can look outside the box in my social life, why not in other arenas? I have applied much of the same questioning to my work life and career. I have not taken a linear traditional career path. Instead, I have tried different possibilities, and have worked hard to integrate my life as an artist into my work life. After much thought and preparation, three years ago I began working part-time so that I would have time and energy to better pursue my avocation as a storyteller and teacher of storytelling.

I think being bisexual also fuels my need to be creative because part of me is forever

trying to integrate those different perspectives. It's similar to the challenge of being raised from a mixed class, mixed cultural background (see my article "Bicultural Déjà vu" in the Oct/Nov issue of *BiWomen*). The need to process these aspects of my life is strong, even if no clear understanding is forthcoming.

Showing my inner process is part of my art — the art of storytelling. Much of the storytelling I do is telling personal stories. My stories can be about growing up as a girl, being raised Catholic, my family, my spirituality, my work life, my relationships, and about my life as a bisexual.

I'm not saying that bisexuals are more creative than the average straight person. But it may be that we are more likely to exercise our creative muscles in the way we live our lives out of sheer necessity. As we become more visible in the wide world, as a community and as individuals, others will be able to look upon the "art" of our lives. I look forward to seeing the effect of the ripples of our creativity on the society at large. Who knows what boxes might get busted open? ▽

Feeling from page 1

Crucial information's coming
through the sensations humming
dying to be heard.

I've got a feeling in my gut.
It's bubbling and gurgling and churning about.
I can't stand still, I want to run away
for fear it's gonna eat me up.

The feeling doesn't lend itself to a name.
It's growing and changing and it's never the same.
It will not hurt me unless I ignore
the message that it's come to share.

Pay attention
to the sound it's making.
Pay attention
feel the ground quaking,

Crucial information's coming
through the sensations humming
dying to be heard.

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Conceiving a New Dance Project

By Kelley Donovan

I am thinking about my next dance production for my dance company, Kelley Donovan & Dancers, which would probably take place in the fall of 2001. I would like to do something related to the coming out experience and personal transformation in general. I've been thinking a lot about the image of the snake and how it changes its skin as a metaphor for changing identity. I am also exploring a more women-centered spirituality so I was researching a little bit about goddesses and discovered the snake goddess which may find its way into a piece of choreography as well.

I would love to incorporate original music, poetry, and improvisation into the performance. I'd also like to do some movement work with individuals who are not trained dancers but interested in doing some movement in a low-pressure performance situation like informal showings in the rehearsal studio with family and friends. The movement would be created from their own natural gestures of expression rather than from traditional dance movement.

I'd love any volunteers for help with production, rehearsals, video, or preview of works in progress and general audience members. Please don't hesitate to get in touch. If anyone has any ideas, suggestions, resources, books, thoughts, titles for show, coming out experiences, and especially

poetry(!) to share please contact me at kdonovan@mit.edu and check out our dance company's web page <http://web.mit.edu/kdonovan/www/> to find out more about us. I am just at the beginning stages of thinking about this project, so any ideas are appreciated. ▽



Sexing the Political

Sexing the Political is a new monthly on-line journal for third wave feminists to theorize, satirize, politicize, and organize about issues related to women's sexuality. It will serve as a forum for the creative and radical political expression of third wave feminists from diverse cultural, sexual, and economic perspectives. *Sexing the Political* will feature regular web columns written by third wave feminists on topics such as: third wave activism, sex advice, queer identity, the feminism of everyday life, pregnancy and motherhood, ecofeminism, and music and book reviews. The webeditor also seeks editorials, short essays (fiction and nonfiction), book and music reviews, art work, and photographs of third wave feminists. Submissions are due by the 15th of each month and should be sent as attachments with specific instructions for downloading. Written work should not exceed 600 words. Contributors must be 20 or 30-something feminists.

Sexing the Political will be launched on February 1, 2001, and will be located at www.sexingthepolitical.com. Please send your contributions, questions, and comments to Krista Jacob, webeditor and publisher, at SexingthePolitic@aol.com.

Just Do It. Right.

By Steph Miserlis

Sometimes I get a deep and strong feeling to "be quiet." It's a feeling that just washes over me. It could come when I'm sitting on the edge of a Cape Cod jetty smelling and hearing the sea; or when I'm doing dishes and the water's running, and my actions feel simple and deliberate; or when I'm making a little wooden box, gently fitting its pieces together. In this quiet place, I don't have depression, or angst.

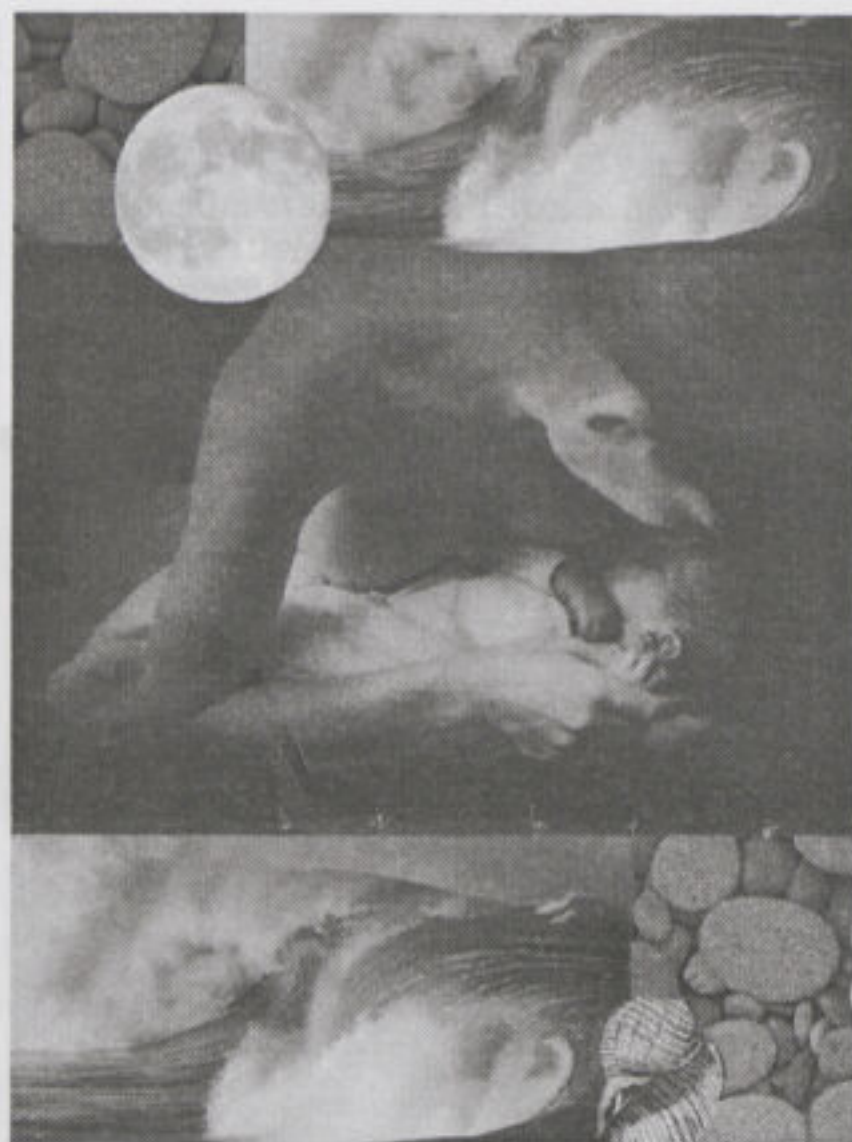
Here — I am free from my constant prattling worries — I simply feel lost in the moment, gliding, confident, awake. I love this peaceful place.

I just need to figure out how to get there deliberately. This sweet feeling comes unannounced, and quickly and silently fades. And when I try to force myself to get there, either my intensity and chattering brain get in the

Do It continues on page 10

Philogyny: Girls Who Kiss And Tell

Philogyny has an open call for submissions for new and established writers. The editors are willing to work with writers to revise works that show potential. We are always accepting submissions that do not fall into upcoming topic issues. We are especially interested in the following for upcoming issues: stories with vanilla sex and essays on poly relationships or Pro-s/m and Anti-s/m philosophies. We also have a few column ideas that need writers. Contact us for more information on columns. The next deadline is February 1, 2001, but there is an open deadline for general submissions. The editors are seeking personal accounts, academic essays, erotic stories, short erotic stories, pix, artwork, poetry, humorous essays about lesbian sex/dating; informative columns, reviews. We strongly suggest you send for guidelines. You can e-mail us at philogynyzone@hotmail.com or to Philogyny; P.O. Box 381732, Cambridge, MA 02238. Please enclose a SASE for guidelines. Submissions cannot be returned.



Above: Mother Sea, Mother Moon; **Right:** Dreamscape.

All works by Robin Colodzin. Copyright 2000. Note: These works, and others, are currently on display at New Words Bookstore in Cambridge. Feel free to contact Robin with any questions or comments at colodzin@yahoo.com.



Visual Poetry: Digital Collage by Robin Colodzin

To me, collage is a way to write stories without words. To seize a moment of movement and power, and freeze it in time. It is up to the viewer to imagine what might have brought this moment into being - what came before, what will come after.

I am interested in the juxtaposition of peacefulness and excitement, adrenaline and calm; in the dialogue between humans and the larger powers of nature. I hope to express the intensity of the moment, against a backdrop that evokes the timelessness of the natural world.

I hope these collages offer your imagination a point of departure. ▽



Book Review: *Visioning: Ten Steps to Designing the Life of Your Dreams*, by Lucia Capacchione, J.P. Tarcher, 2000.

Reviewed by Fennel

This is a great book which uses the process of collage and non-dominant hand journaling to help readers manifest their goals. It is a very accessible and fun book, one which I would recommend if you want to play with new ways to problem solve, or manifest a dream. It can be applied to virtually any arena of life. Sample areas are: relationships, friendships, career, creating a cozy home, etc. The reader makes the collage, following the author's process, and then puts it up where she can see it every day. When you see it, the words and images "sink in" and are integrated into your thinking and your process. But this process shouldn't be overexplained analytically, that is the beauty of it. Give it a try yourself, you might be surprised. ▽

Poetry

My Boston Pie August 10, 1997

By [REDACTED]

As I strolled down the road, not a care in the world, I found myself standing amongst a cluster of girls. I did not know how I got there, nor did I care, it was the most beautiful sight, us all standing there. I pushed my way thru to see what the fuss was, and low and behold, it was just as my thought was. A wonderful smell coming from a bakery, filled with all sorts of tarts and pastries.

There was so much to pick from, I felt very confused, but then it all hit me, I knew which one to choose. It wasn't the most amazing pie I had found, but it was the one I wanted most to pounce on. It had just been put back upon the shelf, with a little note reading, "Try me yourself!" I think it had just come out of the oven, as it was sitting there cooling with another half dozen.

Its looks were rather pleasing to the eye, and I even had to fight for it with some other guy. Secured in my arms, I did not know what to do; the heat and the energy seemed to keep going thru and thru. That's when I decided it was time to begin, our journey homeward, which was making me spin.

As we arrived, I set it on the pie rack, wondering why I couldn't peel my eyes back. It just sat there in all of its beauty, just looking at it made me feel guilty. I did not dare to take a piece yet, so I left it there standing amongst the other set. The funny thing is that it kept drawing me closer; I couldn't help wanting it more and more.

So finally I cut it in two, allowing myself to experience something quite new. The first half was delightful, and very insightful. The second half I dared not touch, deciding in all probability it might be too much. The first was as divine as one would think, and that's when I really needed that drink.

Not only did it make me smile and giggle, but even my insides began to jiggle. That's when I should have recognized the signs, that this little pie had already made me sigh. It was so comforting and there when I needed, that the idea of it all made me rather quite heated. After thinking and thinking of what next to do, I decided to go for it, and made the next move.

This half was much different than the other; the smell, taste, and moisture not like any other. That's when it all hit me over again and again, that this pie as a whole had become my best friend. I needed and wanted it there all the time, but feared to admit to it, as it wasn't quite mine. So I made due, pushing and pulling, until one day I found myself pushing too hard, and there my pie fell, Straight to the ground.

I sat there crying, not knowing what to do, as this experience was also quite new. In an instant I had lost it all, not quite understanding how it happened to fall. My whole pie was gone, and my best friend too. It left me exhausted, upset, and confused.

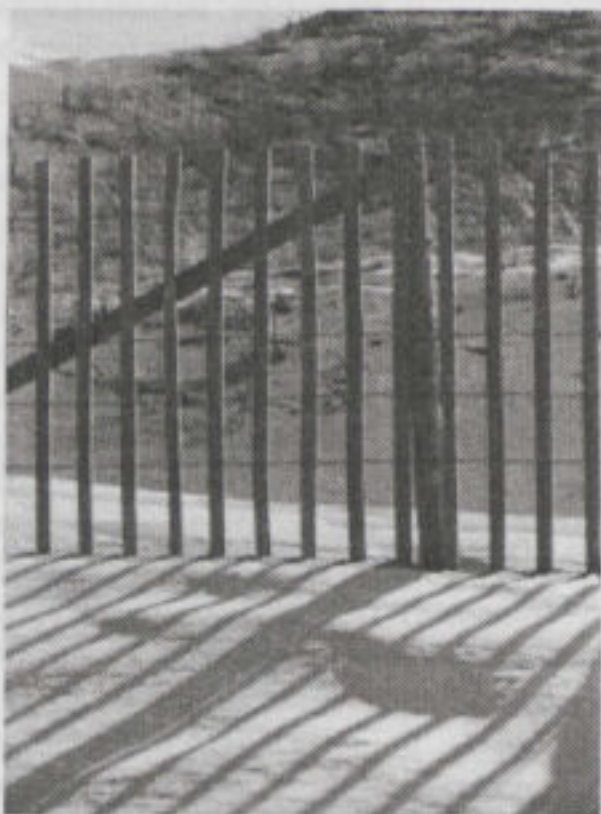
No matter how it all happened, and how confused I may be. One thing's for certain; we are now both free. My feelings for it will never die, as I will always love my Boston pie!

National Queer Hotline Expands Hours

The Gay and Lesbian National Hotline (GLNH), a non-profit, peer-counseling, information, and local resources telephone hotline, has increased its hours of operation. Now with an office in San Francisco and in New York, callers can reach the GLNH toll-free at 1-888-843-4564, Monday-Friday, 4:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight (EST), and Saturday, 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. (EST). The GLNH receives over 100,000 calls per year from teens and adults from across the country. The hotline is free and anonymous and has served the GLBT communities since 1996. Besides being a place to express feelings to a trained and compassionate volunteer, callers can also access information on social, support, political, religious, athletic and professional groups and organizations, and gay-friendly businesses and professionals. For more information about GLNH contact the administrative office at 1-888-415-3022, or glnh@glnh.org or visit www.glnh.org.

True Spirit Conference

American Boyz, Inc. is a national organization for people who were born female but who feel that is not a complete or accurate assessment of who they are (FTMs) and their significant others, friends, families, and allies. American Boyz will host its fifth annual True Spirit Conference (TSC) in Washington, DC, February 16-19, 2001. For more information about the conference and to obtain a registration form for TSC 2001, visit www.true-spirit.org/index.htm or contact Mike Sanders at hoobicone@aol.com.



Eye of the Beholder

By [REDACTED]

All my life I've wondered why I wasn't as creative as the rest of my family. I mean, my mother writes. My sisters all write. Shoot! Seems like my whole family writes! From poetry to books on social change, I have always known my family to write. Not only that, but they are artistically creative too. They are all beautiful artists. They draw, paint, and create the most beautiful pictures. All except me.

From early on, I always knew that I didn't have what it took to be an artist, or a writer. I mean, don't get me wrong, I could draw/paint anything pretty well.... that was sitting right in front of me! I lacked the ability to visualize and draw an object on my own. The only thing I could do well, without looking at something, was to doodle. Even writing came as a challenge. Ask me to write a paper on facts and information and you've got it! But ask me to write a poem or a short story, and you'll be waiting forever! I didn't have a creative bone in my body. At least not the same creative bone the rest of my family had.

At the ripe old age of seven, I received my first 35mm manual camera. My dad's girlfriend gave it to me. She was a schoolteacher, and an amateur photographer in her spare time. She said I had an incredible visual eye! (Whatever that meant!) I started taking photos of everything I could, and would develop the photos with her in her dark room. They weren't too bad. The more I took, the better I became. I realized that I really loved taking photos, and that it came easily to me. She told me that I saw things other people didn't always see, and that that is what she meant by having a visual eye.

A few years later, I think I was eleven or twelve, a fellow professor friend of my mom's, Hans, learned that I was a photo



enthusiast. To my surprise, he too happened to be an amateur photographer. He took photos at weddings, parties, etc., and was looking for a helper. He told me that if I worked for him, that he would show me some tricks of the trade, and would allow me to have as much free film as I wanted, and have use of his dark room whenever I needed to develop my own photos. That's when I really came into my own.

Months after starting work as Hans's helper, he found a photo I had taken of him and sent it in to a photo contest without my knowledge. It won honorable mention! The day he told me was one of the most exciting days of my life! Hans was so proud, as was the rest of my family. I never thought it was possible for me to create something so wonderful. Something so creative. That is, until then.

I continue to enjoy photography. It has become an important part of my life. It has allowed me to write stories without words, perhaps a more creative style of writing. I guess this is the way I was meant to channel my creativity...through the camera lens. ▽



Mixed Bag of Bisexual Content in Queer Publications

By Ellyn Ruthstrom

I have been sorting through a bunch of recent national queer publications and have been amazed at the amount of bisexual material popping up (so to speak). Of course, these publications don't always like to label it as such (what a surprise!) but their readers are often taking them to task more and more for making very obvious biphobic and bi-invisible comments.

I have to thank the *Advocate* for their November 21st article/interview with Amy Bloom for turning me onto a fabulous bi writer I had never heard of. (See next issue for review of her latest book.) When the interviewer deals with Bloom's writing, she stays on target, but when she starts to probe Bloom's personal life and sexuality, the misunderstanding of bi experience is evident. The interviewer notes, "Somehow or another you transitioned from a marriage into the relationship you're in now." Bloom replies, laughing, "That's so funny. It's not really like changing from one gender to the other." The interviewer pushes on, "Come on, that's a pretty big transition!" But Bloom maintains that she knew she was bisexual since she was 13 years old and did not find it difficult, "I actually assumed until I was about 16 or 17 that all women with imagination felt that way. And then I discovered otherwise, and I just thought I was terribly lucky."

Bloom is then asked if she feels sexuality is innate, or learned, or fixed? "Innate, yes; taught, yes; fluid, yes; fixed for some people, sure. It's a big world. Being surprised that there are people in the world who are genuinely attracted to men *and* women is to me a little bit like being surprised that there are people who like chicken *and* salad. It's like, what would the confusion be about?" Still the interviewer persists and brings up the old stereotype about bisexuals, "They're suspect. They're liable to turn tail, run off in another direction. They're liable to be not quite loyal." Bloom's excellent reply, "I suppose one would always have to say, 'Loyal to what?'" "Loyal to whichever side of the fence they're on at the moment." "But one is never really on a side of the fence. One is in a relationship. I think bisexuality would be thin cover indeed for behaving badly."

In the same issue a bi reader from Pennsylvania takes issue with an earlier article about the famous Ellen/Ane and Melissa/Julie breakups. "I disagree with Doug Haldeman that these women are heterosexuals when in opposite-sex relationships and lesbians when in same-sex relationships. This

takes us back to the old stereotypes that to be considered a bisexual, one has to be sexually/romantically involved with persons of both genders simultaneously! As a woman who has been with another woman for 23 years, I can tell you that I continue to be attracted to both sexes. This is because my orientation is bisexual. But this is different from my behavior, which is that of a lesbian. Articles such as this not only serve to demonize bisexuals but also keep them in the closet."

Another reader reacting to the same piece, shared this: "My experience has been that women face pressures within the lesbian community to clearly identify ourselves. Bisexuality is still frowned on and looked at suspiciously, and reluctance to identify oneself sometimes labels a person as straight. For a woman to safely involve herself with another, or the lesbian community in general, means to identify as strictly lesbian – or else. In reality, many women experience their sexuality as more fluid. I too feel unnerved by the prospect of becoming involved with a woman who might one day flop to the other side. But until we loosen up and allow women to honestly speak about the variations in their orientation without the threat of ostracism, we will continue to have these rude awakenings of rolling over one morning and finding our lover has taken off with the Culligan man."

In the December issue of *Out*, "Bisexual Chic: Hollywood's New/Old Love Affair With Frida Kahlo" makes the cover, but the actual piece inside is an excerpt from an historical novel by Barbara Mujica, told in the voice of Frida's sister Cristina. Though clearly identifying Kahlo as bisexual, the novel is described as "reimagin[ing] an era when it was usual for artistic women to dress mannishly and to experiment with lesbianism." This makes it sound like it isn't common now for women (artistic or not) to dress "mannishly," and I dislike the implication, yet again, that bisexuals just "experiment" with same-sex relationships, rather than seeing it as living their lives honestly and truthfully. Besides that, the excerpt itself did not especially make me want to read the book, even though I am as fascinated by Kahlo's life and art as the next person.

Later in the issue, the new relationship on *ER* for Dr. Kerry Weaver's character is noted, but I have yet to see a single publication suggest that it may mean that Weaver is

Mixed continues on page 10

Winter Gender-Free Dance Camp

Lavender Country & Folk Dancers are holding their Gender-Free Dance Camp in Becket, Massachusetts on February 23-25, 2001. Dance Camp is a weekend to meet old and new friends, share each other's talents in dance, song, and music, and enjoy the beautiful Berkshire setting. LCFD welcomes lesbian, gays, bisexuals, and their friends and allies to participate in the camp. For registration information, contact Bob Peterson at 978-597-5861, e-mail CampReg@ContraCorner.com or check out the website at www.tiac.net/users/latte/clfd/dancecamp.cgi.

Make Queer Music

The Boston Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, & Straight Freedom Trail Band is always looking for new members. The band marches in various prides around New England and in the winter converts to a Wind Ensemble that performs in the MetroBoston area. The band also performs community service by playing in hospitals, for the Boston AIDS Walk and other events. Call toll-free at 877-FRDMTRL or e-mail at frdmtrlbnd@aol.com or check out the website at www.gaybands.org/boston.

It's A Bloody Evolution

Editors of a new anthology, "It's a Bloody Evolution," are looking for contributions from women in their twenties and thirties "to capture the truth of women's evolving sexuality, in all its bloody complexity and messy contradictions." Their goal is "to create a collection of our experiences, expressed through diverse creative media, that demolishes the limiting portrayals of women's sexuality once and for all. Through this project, we can collectively create a forum where a true diversity of women's experiences are presented as real, right, and relevant. And, we can pave a wider, more empowering path for the generations of women who will follow."

Contributions may include written or photographic essays, collage, painting, poetry, one-act plays, cartoons, posters, journal entries, or other creative expressions. Topics may include your experiences with the following issues: abortion, adoption, breasts, contraception, sexuality, pregnancy, gender expression, HIV-AIDS, and more. For submission guidelines, e-mail your request to: Krista Jacob and Rhonda Chittenden, BloodyEvolution@aol.com. The deadline is March 1, 2001.

Mixed from page 9

bisexual. It's always discussed as either that she's a lesbian or will have a lesbian relationship, but the two sexual relationships she has had so far have been with men (and they looked like she enjoyed them, too).

The December 5th issue of *The Advocate* had big ol' b-girl Liz Smith on the cover pushing her new memoir, *Natural Blonde*. It's a very interesting interview and it certainly made me want to get a hold of the book. Smith has lived a very full 77 years, and has had long and short term relationship with all sorts of men and women. When asked which relationships were better for her, the men or the women, she replies, "Well, this is just a cliché, but I think that my relationships with women were always much more emotional and more emotionally satisfying and comfortable. And a lot of my relationships with men were more flirtatious and adversarial. I just never felt I was wife material. I always felt that I was a great girlfriend."

In the same issue there were two fabulous letters to the editor defending a bi sensibility. In reaction to a previous piece about lesbians dating women who were once "straight" a reader from Indianapolis decries the implication that lesbians are "victimized by straight women who prey on their emotions and are unable to commit for the long haul." She also deals with the issue of being left for a man, probably the most common "crime" attributed to bi women. "If another party is involved, does it really matter whether that party is a man or a woman? When will we be secure enough in ourselves to see that a woman leaving a lesbian relationship to be with a man is not rejecting her own or anyone else's womanhood but just making a choice based on her own needs or desires?"

The other letter from a bi reader explained that when asked if she was bi how could she choose one person to spend her life with? "It is just as easy to choose one person among the three billion women in the world as it is to choose one person among all six billion people here on earth; your soul mate is your soul mate."

The January *Out* issue had a short interview with Kate Capshaw and Elle MacPherson about the Showtime miniseries "A Girl Thing." It's nice to see Capshaw's character correctly identified as a bisexual, but the discussion about MacPherson's "straight" character who has her first experience with a woman still suggests that any woman who ever tries sex with a woman is a lesbian or a closet case if she doesn't then choose to identify as a lesbian.

Later in the issue, Dan Savage slams bi men in "Getting in Touch with Your Inner Slut." At the end of his piece describing various slutty behaviors of gay men he suggests that being slutty is a phase that most gay men go through but it's not permanent. "Indeed, as phases go, the slut phase is more pleasant for everyone involved than other phases gay men go through, like bisexuality or rainbow-flag waving." Ugh.

It's sad to see how long it is taking the old standard stereotypes and misconceptions to be debunked in the queer community. But seeing the bi and bi-friendly voices join the discussion in greater numbers is heartening. ▽

Do It from page 5

way, or a weighted blanket of inertia stifles me. I can't seem to find this place readily, or to hold it. I've tried countless things to get "there." I've tried meditating by breathing and visualizing my blood flowing through me, and then I fall asleep. I've tried singing long and whiney chants, and then I get completely irritated by my own voice. I've tried burning incense and candles to calm me, and completely relax into staring down the wall. I've read spiritual books, seen therapists, nutritionists, body healers, and hypnotists — only to unleash hell. Ultimately, I know all this study tells me to "surrender," and live in the moment. Well, I've tried to "let go" and for me it is about as easy as not thinking of pink elephants when told to. So, the closest I've come to intentionally traveling to my favorite "place" is when I'm creating.

Sometimes, when I'm mixing soft gentle blue and deep vibrant purple pastels, or sanding a wooden surface so that its most natural and silky grain surfaces, or playing a Chopin etude and just feeling the sweep of notes — I get the "feeling." It's not consistent, by any means, but it is palpable. So, I've decided that it comes down to making my practice of art, a priority. And, I have to work at this, gradually, not dramatically. I do have to "let go." I have to let go of the idea of being the stereotypical strong, peaceful, and confident type, artfully and knowingly gliding through life. I have to let go of the idea of being the wildly possessed, passionate, and completely focused artist. I have to let go of the idea of becoming something or someone else to get the feeling. I just have to practice, which, sadly, is frequently mundane and tedious. Gaining the self-discipline to practice when I'm not in the mood comes down to "just doing it." Sometimes...I do. ▽

CALENDAR *continued from page 12*

becoming educators for the BiHealth Program at Fenway Community Health in Boston and conduct outreach in bars, clubs, social events, and other venues. The training will be at Fenway in room 201, at 7 Haviland St. in Boston. Lunch will be provided! E-mail mmiller@fenwayhealth.org or call 617-927-6032 for more information or to RSVP.

March 4 ♦ Sunday

BBWN Bowling

Brunch, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Meet at Lanes and Games near Alewife in Cambridge. After a few games of ten pin, we'll go find a local eatery for a late brunch/lunch/snack. Call Ellyn if you are interested in attending, 617-623-5535.



March 6 ♦ Tuesday

BBWN Volunteer Serving at the Boston Living Center Ladies' Night, 5:30 p.m. See February 6th.

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Call for topic, 617-354-8807. See February 6th.

March 7 ♦ Wednesday

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. See February 7th.

March 8 ♦ Thursday

BBWN Introductory Meeting, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Learn about BBWN and what resources there are for bis in the Boston area. Cambridge Women's Center, 26 Pleasant St., Cambridge, 617-354-8807.

March 9 ♦ Friday

BiWomen Submissions Deadline. This issue's theme is "Transitions." See page 2 for more ideas. Send submissions to: BiWomen, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA, 02140 or e-mail to nellythrustmor@aol.com.

Bi Coffee at the Diesel Cafe in Davis Square, 7 p.m. The Diesel is at 257 Elm Street in Somerville, nearest T stop is Davis Square on the Red Line.

March 11 ♦ Sunday

BBWN Potluck Video Brunch at Natalie's in Roslindale, noon. Come socialize and share some good food, then we'll kick back and watch a video together. If weather permits, we'll take a walk in the Arnold Arboretum. Call Natalie for directions, 617-327-0772 or e-mail at NRivkin777@aol.com.

March 13 ♦ Tuesday

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. See February 13th.

March 14 ♦ Wednesday

Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m. See February 14th.

March 17 ♦ Saturday

Biversity Brunch, 11:30 a.m. Brunch will return to Johnny D's on Holland St. in Davis Square in

Come visit BBWN
online at:

biresource.org/bbwn

*Learn about BBWN, read snippets
of the newsletter, and find links to
many different bi resources.*

Somerville. Always a favorite. The Davis Square T stop on the Red Line is just across the street. The Biversity Planning Meeting will be at the restaurant following the brunch.

March 20 ♦ Tuesday

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Call for topic, 617-354-8807. See February 6th.

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. See February 7th.

March 25 ♦ Sunday

Biversity Brunch, 1 p.m. Join us for brunch at the Dixie Kitchen, 182 Mass Ave. in Back Bay, Boston. Located midway between the Hynes (B,C, D lines) and Symphony (E line) stations on the Green Line.

March 27 ♦ Tuesday

BiWomen mailing, 7-9 p.m. at the Bi Office at 29 Stanhope St. Can you say label, stuff, and seal? Join us. Socialize during and after.

Biversity Boston is
the mixed gender
bisexual Network
of Greater Boston.

Ongoing Events

4th Sundays: Bi
People of Color Potluck.
NOTE: The PoC Potluck
is on hiatus for February
and March.

Wednesdays:

Gendertalk. 8:30-9:30
p.m. on WMBR 88.1 FM.
Deals with transgender
and queer issues.

Women's Club Nights

Thursdays: Dyke Night
at the Midway Cafe, 3496
Washington Street in
Jamaica Plain.

Saturdays: Lava Bar in
Kenmore Square, 575
Commonwealth Ave. at
the Howard Johnson's.

BiWomen
wants you!!!



SUBSCRIPTION RATE

for BiWomen
(sliding scale)

___ \$0-\$20 (pay what you can)

___ \$20-\$30 (suggested)

___ \$30-\$100 Extra Special Donor

___ Renewal

___ New Subscriber

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE (Optional) _____

BBWN, P.O. BOX 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140

The "Bi Office"

is the Bisexual Resource Center, located at 29 Stanhope Street, behind Club Cafe, right next door to Bertucci's and just down the street from the Hard Rock Cafe. For info call 617-424-9595.

Ongoing Events

1st & 3rd

Tuesdays:

Bi Women's Rap. 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. For info and discussion topics call 617-354-8807.

2nd Tuesdays:

NEW! Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. Info: 617-354-8807.

1st & 3rd

Thursdays:

Bi Women's Resource & Support Group. 7 p.m. at the Women's Health Consortium, 29 Vaughan Mall, Portsmouth, NH. For info call 603-431-1669 or contact Sue Corcoran at schmoo@nh.ultranet.com.

Show your VISIBILITY with buttons!!

- ◆ If God had meant for people to be bisexual there would be two sexes.
- ◆ I'm bisexual and I'm NOT attracted to you.
- ◆ Racism, Sexism, Homophobia - Recognize the Connections.
- ◆ Bisexual Pride
- ◆ VISIBILITY

\$2.00 per button (includes postage) to: BBWN, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140.

CALENDAR

February 1 & 2 ♦ Thursday & Friday

Carol Queen's "Peep Show," 7:30 p.m. This spoken word show takes you behind the scenes into a red-light zone that inspired her books "Real Live Nude Girl" and "Exhibitionism for the Shy." In the intimate 45-seat screening room at the Coolidge Corner Theater. 18+, tickets \$15 (\$18 day of show) available at Grand Opening! or by calling 617-731-2626.

February 6 ♦ Tuesday

BBWN Volunteer Serving at the Boston Living Center Ladies' Night, 5:30 p.m. Help serve the women clients at the Living Center's Ladies Night Dinner in the second floor cafeteria. Your own meal is provided for you, too. Call Ellyn to volunteer, 617-623-5535. 29 Stanhope St., Boston. Nearest T is the Back Bay Orange Line Station.

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. A discussion group for bisexual, bi-friendly, and questioning women. Topic: "Butch/Femme in the Bisexual Community." Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., 617-354-8807.

February 7 ♦ Wednesday

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. An informal support group for people who think they may be bisexual or attracted to more than one sex. A small donation is requested to help pay for the space. The group meets at the Bisexual Resource Center at 29 Stanhope St. in Boston. Call 617-424-9595 for info.

February 10 ♦ Saturday

BBWN Potluck Brunch at Lucy's in Belmont, noon. Bring a dish and/or drink along and share an afternoon with some great bi women. Near bus line from Harvard Square. For info/directions call Lucy at 617-484-5964 or e-mail lucylizard@yahoo.com.

February 13 ♦ Tuesday

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. Newly organized group that plans to meet monthly. Call 617-354-8807 for directions.

February 14 ♦ Wednesday

Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m. All bi community members welcome to attend. The meeting is at 29 Stanhope St. in Back Bay.

February 17 ♦ Saturday

Biversity Brunch, 11:30 a.m. Brunch at Thornton's, 100 Peterborough St. in Boston's Fenway area. T stop is Fenway on the D branch of the Green Line.

February 18 ♦ Sunday

BBWN Skating Party, 1 p.m. at Frog Pond on Boston Common. Bring your own skates, or rent them there. Or just come along and cheer from the sidelines. We'll go warm up afterwards with some hot chocolate and other treats. Call Natalie if you are interested, 617-327-0772.

February 20 ♦ Tuesday

Coming Out as Bisexual. 7-9 p.m. See February 7th.

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Topic: "The Dating Handbook: Let's Write it Together" See February 6th.

February 25 ♦ Sunday

Biversity Brunch and Skating Party, 1 p.m. Enjoy Malaysian food at Tigerlily, 8 Westland Avenue in Boston. Nearest T stops are the Green Line at Symphony on the E branch or Hynes on the B, C, and D branches. After the brunch there will be a skating party at the Frog Pond on Boston Common, starting at 2:30 p.m.

February 26 ♦ Monday

Color Me Healthy presents "Transgenders Applying Power," 6-7 p.m. Help build a stronger and diverse population of transgender clients that access care at Fenway Community Health, 7 Haviland Street, Boston. Contact te'shaya for info at TFranklin@fenwayhealth.org.

March 1 ♦ Thursday

2001: A BBWN Organizing Odyssey, 6:30 p.m. at the Boston Living Center, 4th floor, 29 Stanhope St., Boston. Come to help plan events, brainstorm newsletter topics, and more. See page 3 sidebar for more details. Pizza will be ordered, organizing will take place, and then those interested will go to Club Cafe for Women's Night.

March 3 ♦ Saturday

BiHealth Educator Training, 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. This free training is an opportunity to learn how to educate others about bisexuality and HIV/STD prevention. Anyone with an interest in learning more about HIV, sexually transmitted diseases, and/or bisexuality is welcome to attend. People who complete the training will have the option of

CALENDAR continues on page 11

Transitions

From Lesbian to Bisexual

by Lynne Levine

I started my "queer" life as a lesbian. In the mid-1970's, when I was first coming out, lesbian identity seemed to be the only available option. Plus, I was young, angry, feminist, and eager to reject what I saw as societally-mandated heterosexuality.

Being a lesbian came naturally to me in those days. I'd had crushes on my female friends back in high school, and now I could finally act on my lesbian desires! For a few years, I really had no interest in men. Then, slowly, the occasional attraction to someone of the opposite sex crept into my consciousness. I fought those attractions, wanting to continue to be a good, "pure" lesbian. But those impure thoughts slowly gathered strength till finally, twelve years after declaring myself a lesbian, I could no longer resist my desires toward men.

I went running to BBWN for support. For me, there was no going back to calling myself a lesbian. It was a difficult transition — being a lesbian had been a huge part of my identity. Plus, I'd heard a lot of negative things about bisexuals during my years as a lesbian, and suddenly I was one of those awful women, those traitorous creatures who would "sleep with the enemy," "leave a woman for a man," (the ultimate betrayal) etc. I was also afraid of ostracism — of losing my lesbian friends — but in retrospect, my internalized biphobia was the greater demon. It took several years, and the help of a support group of women who were also making this transition (a group we lovingly self-labeled "The Hasbiens") for me to come to terms with this change in my identity.

Now that I have been calling myself bisexual for more years than I identified as lesbian, the bi label feels so comfortable it is hard to imagine ever having identified as anything other than bi. I have had significant relationships with both women and men during my lifetime, and feel that the label "bisexual" will always fit. My labeling transition is complete.

Lesbian continues on page 8



Kelley Donovan performing at the Dance Complex.

The Bad, The Good, and The Lesson

By Kelley Donovan

I think the most difficult transition in my life came as a result of a severe injury to my foot in 1994. I had to stop dancing for almost two years and after many tests and no clear diagnosis, I had to accept the fact that I might have to live with physical pain indefinitely and that a dance career, the way I had envisioned it, might not be possible. I was able to find some solutions to relieve some discomfort, but not entirely. In 1995-6 I became a poster-child for alternative medicine and tried many different things. The desperation of needing relief from pain prompted me to try things I never would have considered in the past such as acupuncture, hypnotherapy, homeopathy, herbal remedies, and others which opened me up to more ways of thinking about healing, life, and health than I had previously ever considered possible.

Bad continues on page 10

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Local Bi News.....	3
In Search of Change..	4
Loss, Time, and Perspective.....	5
Poetry.....	5
Tides of Change.....	6
True Love.....	8
Book Reviews.....	9
Calendar.....	11-12

Volunteers of the Month

Gail

Robyn Ochs

Lynn Rosenbaum

Fennel

Lynne Levine

Kira

Eileen

Peggy

Abby

Kelley

Susanna

Elena

Debbie Block-
Schwenk

**And many
more fabulous
women! You
know who
you are!**

BiWomen is published bi-monthly.

Editor:

Ellyn Ruthstrom

Proofreader:

**Printed on
recycled paper**

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay people within the larger society.

Editor's Notes

The topic of "Transitions" has turned out to produce quite an interesting issue. I must say it started off very slowly, with not too many people responding to the call to write. But when I put out a final email plea for submissions, people sent me some absolutely wonderful responses. From a change of sexual identity to the death of a parent, from learning how to feel to falling in love — and much more. Thank you all for sharing some very meaningful experiences of your life with all of us.

The Fourth Edition of the *Bisexual Resource Guide* is at the printer's right now and will soon be available at bookstores and through the Bisexual Resource Center's website (www.biresource.org). The Guide is edited by BBWN's Robyn Ochs and is published by the BRC. It is a tremendous resource to locate bi and bi-friendly groups around the country and around the world. It also has listings of books, movies, email lists, and other sources of bi information. The BRC will be holding a kick-off event some time in April to celebrate the hard work that many people in the Boston community have contributed and to make people aware of this wonderful new guide. We did not have the date of the event by our own publication date, but we will try to reach people through phone and email when the date is determined.

Someone on email asked me recently how she could volunteer some time for BBWN. Here are a few ways you can help support the work of BBWN:

- Write for the newsletter.
- Help mail the newsletter every other month. (See calendar, May 29th.)
- Host a brunch or other event.
- Make a financial contribution.
- Help serve dinner on Ladies Night at the Boston Living Center with other BBWN members. (See calendar, first Tuesdays.)
- Distribute newsletters at events or places where people pick them up.

NEXT IN *BiWOMEN*

The *BiWomen* theme for
June/July is:

Biphobia/Bi Positive

Have you felt the stings of biphobia in your life? Have you dealt with your own internalized biphobia? Alternatively, what makes you really love being bi? When in your life have you felt really connected to a wonderful bi community, really supported by others who love that you are bi?

Deadline: May 16, 2001

FUTURE ISSUES IN 2001

*August/September
Out in Nature*

PLEASE SUBMIT TO *BiWOMEN* !

Send articles, calendar entries, letters, artwork, photos, news, and views to:

BiWomen

P.O. Box 400639

Cambridge, MA 02140

or via email to

NellyThrustmor@aol.com

***If you do not want your name
published, please tell us.***

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February's BBWN brunch at Lucy's in Belmont attracted some long-term members as well as a couple of new faces. If you are interested in hosting a brunch in your home, please call Ellyn at 617-623-5535. You can choose a theme (past themes have included a book swap, videos, travel stories, fondue, and a literary salon) or just have a casual potluck and conversation.

Survey Says?

We received 32 replies to the survey we sent out in the last issue: 25 were subscribers and 5 were not, 3 were first time readers. The parts of the newsletter that respondents were most likely to read were the theme articles, the sidebars, the calendar, and the movie and book reviews. 10 of the 32 had attended a BBWN brunch and 10 had attended a BBWN newsletter stuffing. 22 respondents were from Massachusetts, the remaining 10 were from Maine, Rhode Island, Wisconsin, California, New York, and Alabama. On the whole, readers liked the newsletter and they gave a lot of good suggestions for future issue themes. We will be publishing more of the survey results in the next issue.

NOW Summit to Address LesBiTrans Issues

Moving Forward Together: NOW's Northeast LesBiTrans Strategy Summit and Celebration will be taking place in Fairlee, Vermont, November 16-18, 2001. The mission statement of the summit is: "To bring together lesbians, bisexual and transgender women, and our allies for a feminist strategy session that maintains and broadens civil rights in the current challenging political climate. Our goal is to break down barriers that splinter our movement, build coalition, and share skills and information that will strengthen and unite our causes. We want to move forward together — as feminists, as women, as allies — to strategize for our

future and celebrate our victories and lives."

BBWN is involved with the planning of the conference and it would be great if we could send workshop presenters and participants to make sure that bi women's voices are included in this important gathering. Please contact Ellyn Ruthstrom (617-623-5535, nellythrustmor@aol.com) if you are interested in attending or helping to organize the event. More information will be available in the next issue.

BBWN Member Highlighted in Venus

Venus magazine's February issue features a cover story called "Bisexuality: The Sweetest Taboo." Venus is a bimonthly national magazine for "people of African descent in the life" and the article deals with the challenges of being bi in the black community. Along with the cover story is a one-page article called "Bi Like Me" which highlights local BBWN member Denise Pruitt-Pope. She discusses her own life as well as her realization as a Bi Health educator that a large number of the lesbians of color she was meeting had bisexual behavior, but did not tend to identify as bisexual. Venus also includes an "Are you really bi?" sexuality quiz and a listing of bi resources and organizations, including our local BRC and the *Bisexual Resource Guide*.



The Bisexual Resource Center has a new Board of Directors that is working hard to expand the work of the center. Above are the BRC board members who were at the recent board retreat held at GLAD's downtown office. From left to right: Carla Schack, Ellyn Ruthstrom, Sheeri Kritzer, Alan Hamilton, Buzz Harris, and Debbie Block-Schwenk. Not pictured: Kathryn Schnaible.

Books for GLBT Prisoners Sought

The Prison Book Program is in need of books by and about lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and trans/TV/TS folks (we are particularly in need of gay men's books: fiction, history, etc.). The only way prisoners can receive books is directly from publishers or from bookstores (Prison Book Program is affiliated with Lucy Parson Bookstore). The project will take new and used books, plus any LGBT magazines. You can drop them off at Prison Book Program on Tuesdays 6-8 p.m. or Thursdays 6-9 p.m. or mail them to us at: Prison Book Program, 110 Arlington St., Boston, MA 02116, ATTN: Debbie. For more information, check out the website at www.prisonactivists.org/prisonbookprogram/ or email Debbie Richards at d7ar@yahoo.com.

In Search of Change

By Kate Griffin

There are two kinds of people in the world: those who divide the world into two kinds, and those who don't! But if we did divide the world, could we say that the two divisions are those who welcome transition and those who don't? Continuing the division, are there actually two kinds of transition? It seems that there are the "natural" transitions that happen without any initiative on our part. For example, we are transformed at puberty: hair grows in new and exciting places, our ear becomes permanently attached to some music maker or the telephone, and our brains become mush. Then there are the transitions which we seek, which we plan, and which we work hard to achieve.

Here's an example: I discovered through therapy, following an attack by a man with a knife, that I was not in touch with my emotions and I found it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to express much of any emotion except anger.

I don't want to make this seem simple; it took me a long time after I began to suspect that it was true (I just didn't "feel") to really accept that as a fact. Then I began to work on trying to learn to feel. How I did it is not easy to explain, but I know that I had to make myself vulnerable. I had to allow myself to be in a position that was not the usual one of being light-hearted and joking and basically acting like I knew more than most of the people I was with.

I also had to be in the moment. We read much about this, but if you want to change you have to know who you are and what is happening at any given moment. You have to see the sun set; you have to feel the cold rain on your face and observe the way people lean into the wind as they hurry home from the T stop. You have to be there and you have to see how you look in that moment. You can't be listening to music; you can't be talking all the time.

Now once I began to do that and to be honest about who I was — meaning accepting my faults and my good points — I could somehow begin to feel something. I went on from the "something" to slightly stronger feelings finally arriving at actually feeling the pain. And, finally, there was also joy.

I became a quieter person because I learned to listen to the other person. I learned to really listen and not be preparing the next thing I was going to say. I sought to understand the other person.

This was one of the hardest transitions I've faced and I've faced a lot. I graduated from college as a teacher and enjoyed the classroom for eight years before transforming myself into a foreign service information officer. Then I lived in France, then I came back to the States and became a salesperson and so on.

I've had many transitions also concerning my bisexuality. At first I hid it for a very long time and then I was very out and very bi. Now I am less militant about the label. I even played the role of a lesbian in a recent round table discussion of sexuality! What next?

I think transition comes naturally to me. After all, I was born into a racist, sexist area of our country at a time when women had very few opportunities to be anything but housewives — so who wouldn't have wanted to transition out of that?

Kate would be happy to dialogue with you on this subject: kategriff@juno.com.



Bodacious BBWN members at the March Bowling Brunch at Lanes and Games.

Loss, Time, and Perspective

By Peggy Fieland

This piece was written some time ago. I was married at the time I wrote this. I've since separated, then divorced. I've been in and out of two relationships of some duration (both women), and I'm now dating another woman. I don't see any men in my future; it's been over ten years since I was attracted to a man, and I never did seem to fall in love with men the way I do with women. I've largely stopped trying to decide whether my current lack of interest in men is enough to push me over the line into "lesbian" or whether my rather substantial history with them is enough for me to continue to identify as "bisexual"; anyone who asks me will get a paragraph instead of a word.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 19..

My father died Thursday night. My last living parent is now dead, making me an "orphan," in spite of being in my forties. My sister called about 12:30 a.m. Thursday night — Friday morning, really — to tell me. She had called two days earlier to say that he had pneumonia and that the doctors were not hopeful, but somehow I didn't believe it would happen.

It was pretty much in the nature of a merciful release given his state of ill health and, most of all, his increasing senility. He was a tremendously bright man, a lawyer in sole practice who argued two cases before the Supreme Court, who couldn't even hold a rational conversation and barely recognized his children and grandchildren by the time he died. Last time J. and I were in New York City, he recognized C., but had trouble with M., who had grown much taller, and C.R., who had lost a lot of his baby looks. His conversations were about conspiracies, old cases, and the like, when he could manage to pay attention and have them.

He was a difficult man, more adept with ideas than with people, and in many ways he was a poor husband and an often-absent father. His interest in his grandchildren was genuine but sporadic, even with D. and R, who live in New York City.

I regret the chance that the kids and I will never have to be close to him. I miss the chess games he won't

play with M., the conversations he won't have with C. and the pictures C.R. won't draw for him. I'll never have to decide whether or not to come out to him or to tell him if J. and I separate.

Strangely, some of my fondest memories are of scrambled eggs and English grammar. I remember him teaching me to make scrambled eggs when I was probably in elementary school — I'm still the official egg scrambler in my house. We used to have long nit-picking (as I thought then) conversations about English grammar around the dinner table when I was in high school. At the time I found them incredibly annoying, but now I regard his trying to pass on to me his love of the English language as one of the best things he did.

A while back J. consulted *The Elements of Style* on an obscure point of grammar. J. found it cryptic, and as I read the entry over his shoulder an entire conversation my father and I had about that same point replayed itself in my head. I read *Elements of Style* and they all come back to me, these old conversations, my father's legacy to me.

Seasons

By [REDACTED]

Boyfriends in the summer and
Women lovers during the year
Are the seasons of the sun's passion fire and winter's
Warmth like a sparking tree.
And I have loved men in
The spring and swum like
Mermaids, or tropical fish
On the longest days.
So perhaps there are no
Patterns just rotations of the
Planet as she tumbles
Through space
Love is the only cycle
Spinning, spinning
Deep
Seeking no gender
Emanating
Woman.

Passing Lines: Immigration and (Homo)sexuality

Thursday, April 5, 2001, Harvard University is hosting a free one-day conference and workshop called "Passing Lines: Immigration and (Homo)sexuality" on the role of sexuality and sexual orientation in immigration to the United States from Latin America and the Caribbean. Issues such as political asylum, health requirements (HIV/AIDS), marriage and marriage fraud, political affiliation, profiling, border controls, and INS interviews, will be addressed. In recognition of the importance of eyewitness testimony, expertise, and advocacy, the conference will bring together scholars, activists, and others from both sides of the border. Special attention will be given to law and policy; health and politics; heterosexism, homophobia, and "machismo"; cultural responses such as theater, writing, film, or music; and religion, education, and the conceptualization of the family. For more information contact: Marcela Renteria, DRCLAS Conference Coordinator, renteria@fas.harvard.edu, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, 61 Kirkland Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Helpline Needs Volunteers

The Gay and Lesbian Helpline and the Peer Listening Line of Fenway Community Health is looking for volunteers to provide information, referral, and support to their lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered callers. A new volunteer training will be held in April; if interested, email program coordinator Jim Maynard at jmaynard@fenwayhealth.org or call him at 617-927-6242. He will send you information and an application. They are especially in need of women volunteers. Help our community and be the voice that answers the call!

Transitions: Kira

The most difficult transition in my life happens to be the most positive as well. A year after graduating from college, I moved up to Boston to begin graduate school. Orientation for school occurred the day after I arrived in Boston, and I was late because I got lost going around a typical, unmarked Boston rotary. I had never lived on my own before, and while I hated dining hall food in college, the idea of cooking for myself was quite scary. Living in a new city was quite difficult at first, and I felt quite isolated and lonely at times. However, I have grown so much these past couple of years. The physical and psychological distance from my family has allowed me to develop into my own person, and precipitated the "coming out" process that was waiting to occur.

The Tides of Change

By Linda Blair

Two years ago my life changed. It was two years ago next Tuesday and I remember it like it was yesterday. You see, this Tuesday is the second anniversary of the day I met "the" woman.

You know how it is in fairy tales. Princess meets princess and they live happily ever after. But I always thought that was just the stuff of fairy tales. Surely the people who acted that way in real life were either kidding themselves or awfully easy to please. Either way I was fairly convinced this couldn't happen to me. After all, I'd been waiting my whole life and the cynicism was amassing like a waxy buildup on the soul.

Luckily, the optimist inside me struggling to get free hadn't abandoned hope. And, thank goodness, it was "she" who took charge when "we" met.

I think it was her smile and the positive energy she emitted that first attracted me to her. This woman just seemed to radiate love and warmth. In retrospect, I can see that her general good nature and optimism were revved up because she was "coming out" and caught up in the excitement and wonder of it all.

Luckily, I was her type (thank you goddess for making me short and butch!) and every ounce of cynicism just flew out of me at the mere sight of her. That cynicism was just no match for the sheer joy and ecstasy of falling in love!

It took about three hours into our first date for me to know beyond a shadow of a doubt that this woman was going to make me very happy. And by hour twelve of that first date the intimacy that was developing between us felt thick and sweet and smooth as honey. I "knew" this was what I'd been waiting for. I was beyond grateful that I was who she'd been waiting for, too. The night after our first date I came home to a message that said "Honey, you are my dream lover." I took that tape out of the machine and have kept it to this day.

So after a beginning

like that, you may be wondering how we are doing now just days before our second anniversary. We both agree the answer is fabulously. If the amount you laugh together is a good indicator, and I think it is, only the Russian judge would give us anything less than a 9.9. We're in love and, perhaps more importantly, we like each other a lot!

Two and a half years ago, on my 33rd birthday, I wrote the following words for this very publication:

I'm not a person who generally deals well with abrupt change. It tends to take me quite a while to figure out what I want and how to get it, then much longer to actually work toward it. I view life and most everything in it as a process.

Yeah, well, everything changes. Six months after I wrote this, I fell knock down, head-over-heels in love, almost instantly.

I believe that change happens when you're ready. Almost anyone who's ever come out, as bi or whatever else, can attest to that. And I guess that two years ago I was ready for some fast changes. There I was dancing to a slow tune as usual and, boom, the tempo sped up and the music got louder and, somewhat to my surprise, I was able to stay on the beat.

Just after my 33rd birthday I started to make room in my life for change. I didn't know what it might be, but I started clearing time for it nonetheless. So I transitioned out of all the activism work I was doing in the bi community. I resigned as editor of *BiWomen* as well as from the Bi Resource Center board, things that took up almost all my spare time.

And then like Marlin Perkins waiting for the big game to spring into action, I waited. And just when I was looking in one direction and expecting a great job opportunity to arise, love came galloping in from the other side and swept me off my feet.

Then there was the moving in together thing. Falling back on my familiar pattern, after nine months of commuting from West Roxbury to Arlington (two bus rides and two train transfers each way) from my castle to my princesses', I was sticking with my tried and true strategy of long, gradual transitions. I'd literally been turning down invitations to move into her place since our second date. I had every reason in the book. I liked my roommate, I had too many things to even want to "think" about moving them all, I liked my sunny but inexpensive apartment, and, of course, everyone knows

that moving too fast can be the downfall of even the most solid relationship.

Well, that was all "before" I got the call from my roommate on New Year's Eve. Never once had my roommate called me at my "second home" before, so I knew that something had to be up. "Lily called me today to give us thirty days notice that she's ending the lease. Her brother is getting married and she wants him and his wife to live in our apartment."

Before I even got off the phone, naturally, I knew what this meant. Every excuse and every good reason I had not to move in together no longer applied. My work was "literally" down the street from my girlfriend's new house that she bought partly with me in mind. There was no getting out of moving my things "somewhere" and I couldn't possibly find a more reasonable living arrangement economically. And nine months of overnights and weekends together had shown that we had very compatible "home" styles.

Like falling in love, getting kicked out of my apartment was just what I needed. I could have continued commuting across Boston for years, but living together has certainly opened up new possibilities. "Nesting," it turns out, has been

both a comforting and very intimate experience. I like it and I'm glad I didn't put it off.

In general, I'm still a girl who likes to take it slow, test the water and get in one step at a time. But it's really exciting to know that when conditions are ready: when you've prepared the space in your life, or when the rug is pulled out from under you (literally!), or when your emotions just come in a torrent that you couldn't control if you tried, change just happens. In my article on "Coming of Age" that I mentioned earlier, I wrote:

Coming out was without a doubt a "coming of age" experience for me for several reasons. First, it was the most exciting experience I've ever had. The summer before my 27th birthday, life started moving much faster than usual. I found myself hurtling toward some huge, exciting, scary and inescapable unknown.

It's nice to know that despite my best efforts to just keep plodding along, the tides of change have once again rushed me downstream and brought me to where I am today — happy and in love and plodding along once again.

Human Rights Week and Pride Festival

The Gay and Lesbian Community Advocates of Lawrence (GLCAL) are proud to announce the Third Annual Merrimack Valley Human Rights Week & Fourth Annual Pride Festival May 27th - June 2, 2001. All events are FREE and open to all ages. There will be an AIDS Quilt Display and Art Show all week at The Lawrence Heritage Visitors Center, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Fuchsia Friday is June 1st at the Bernstein Bookstore, 468 Essex Street in Lawrence and will include a potluck dinner, a Speak Out presentation, and a candlelight vigil to remember those who are suffering at the hands of others. Organizing meetings will take place April 3 and 17 and every Tuesday in May. All meetings will be at Bernstein Bookstore at 7 p.m. If you have any questions or comments regarding the Human Rights Week or Pride activities, please call Rose Gonzalez at 978-688-2068, or email massgreens@igc.org.

Transitions: Eileen

The most difficult transition in my life was when my husband decided to be celibate with me because he feels he is more gay than bi. That was almost seven years ago in 1994, an awful year for us in general because my Dad died in March and my only aunt in June, on Pride Sunday. I had come out as bi in 1990 and he told me about himself being bi even before we got married in 1981. After he made the decision to be celibate with me, it was awful not being able to make love to him anymore and very difficult to accept his disinterest in any intimacy with me at all. Somehow I have lived through it and my love for him as a person has sustained me. He is my soul mate.

Even though this is not what I signed up for so long ago at the altar of my hometown church — the loss of the sexual and intimate relationship — I think my faith in God has sustained me. She has surely carried me many, many times through the dark nights of my soul.

I have a lover now, a woman. She and I have been friends for about three years and became intimate in May 2000. I am very content and happy with what we've got. She is also married. My husband has given me his blessing. Part of me hopes that he finds a man who will make him happy and content too, and part of me longs for him to return to my bed. He swears he never will, that once he has made up his Scorpio mind he won't ever budge from that decision. Maybe so, but you never know. Maybe that is false hope.



Photo by [REDACTED]

Ms. Boston Leather

The Ms. Boston Leather Contest will be held May 17-18, 2001 at two separate venues around town. Ms. Boston Leather shall proudly represent the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women of the greater Boston area. On Thursday, May 17, 8-10:00 p.m. meet and greet contestants and judges at Dyke Night at the Midway Cafe in Jamaica Plain. (Info: <http://www.djdec.com/dykenite/>) On Friday, May 18, 8 p.m.-2 a.m. the Ms. Boston Leather Contest will take place at Boston's RAMROD bar. (Info: <http://ramrod.boston.com/>) It's a celebration of sexual freedom for women, and for all folk who love leather.

True Love Can Change A Lot

By Alissa

I have never been very attracted to the opposite sex. Maybe that's a strange sentence to compose, considering my mother just called to say the wedding dress and my fiancé's tux have just arrived at the doorstep.

It's all so traditional, so romantic, especially if the story is told leaving out a few key scenes. He asked my father for my hand in marriage — the proposal on Christmas Eve overlooking the city, his grandmother's ring, like Cinderella's glass slipper, the tiny heirloom fit perfectly. A marriage of true love to the man with whom I lost my virginity...well, technically...by heterosexual standards.

When my fiancé and I met he was in the midst of affairs with three different men, having finalized his divorce a few years prior.

He'd spent a lifetime playing sexual identity tennis — Gay? Straight? Gay? Straight? I had had a lifetime of lesbian romances, flings, and intense crushes. I grew up within Boston's queer community. To my accepting friends, family, even grandparents, lesbianism is a natural part of me, like my lifelong love of creating artwork. Not that my experience in coming out was not painful and difficult for my family but as very loving people they have all come to embrace me.

My transition from exclusively lesbian experiences to my romance with my fiancé has been a pleasure, but not easy. It was harder for me on a personal level than my coming out experience as a lesbian. When we first met I knew we were right for each other, but I was not sure if I was ready for that kind of change. Though I had never found romantic love with a man before, I had always promised to give myself a chance with anyone who really seemed right for me, regardless of gender. I had promised myself many years ago to seek out happiness in love above all.

Throughout, my family and friends have supported me, although my life transitions have sometimes been difficult for them to understand. My parents have more than embraced my fiancé. They love him like family already. I am glad I took a leap of faith and did not look the other way because of my lover's sex. I suppose it's true: Love often blooms where least expected.

By the way, Grandma sent two engagement gifts and can't wait for the wedding...but she's still a bit confused!

Transitions: Peggy

Coming out was at once the most difficult and most rewarding transition of my life. It was years ago, I was married, and my sons were five, seven and nine; I'd been married for sixteen years and in the closet for over twenty. During the entire time, I hadn't told a single other person I was attracted to women, though a good few managed to figure it out.

I had a personal moment of truth in my twenties, when I fell heavily for a woman in a ballet class I was taking. While this was definitely a personal moment of truth, I still didn't manage to come out. This was probably in 1969* or so, but my secrecy was at least as much due to my family history (ignore it and it will go away) as anything else.

It's hard for me to imagine anyone keeping that kind of a secret for over twenty years without a great many personal issues, and I certainly was no exception. Reclaiming the parts of myself I'd spent years suppressing was, at most, the most difficult and most rewarding thing I've ever done.

What propelled me out of the closet? Shear internal pressure, my own personal midlife crisis. I'd become infatuated with another woman, I was approaching middle age (well, maybe I was middle aged!), my mother was dead and my father aging. I was becoming the next generation. I needed to embrace my whole self.

*So OK, I'm in my 50's now. I swear it just happened; all I did was keep breathing in and out.

Lesbian from page 1

And yet, I am still transitioning. Several years after coming out as bisexual, I declared I was a "Kinsey four," meaning, for me, more lesbian than heterosexual in terms of my attractions and desires. Now, in 2001, I place myself at about a "Kinsey two" — definitely more heterosexual than lesbian. Sometimes, I feel it would be more politically correct to be a Kinsey four, as if, the closer to queer, the better. Perhaps I still have a few demons to exorcise; there still exists an internalized biphobic voice in my head whispering "traitor"!

Most of the time, though, I feel comfortable with myself. The transitions I have been through, the fluctuations in my desires, are part of what it means to me to be bisexual.



Book Review: *Trans-Sister Radio*, by Chris Bohjalian, Harmony Books, 2000.

Reviewed by Lynn Rosenbaum

T*rans-Sister Radio*, by Chris Bohjalian, provides a detailed fictional account of one person's transition from a man to a woman. Using rotating first person narration, Bohjalian focuses not only on the physical and emotional effects on Dana, a professor in a small town in Vermont, but also on the effects on Allison, Dana's lover; Carly, Allison's daughter; Will, Allison's ex-husband; and the close-knit town in which they all live. Dana's transformation raises questions of gender and sexual orientation for everyone involved.

When Allison, a divorced mother and school teacher, begins to date Dana, she does not know of his intention to become a woman. All she knows is that he is a gentle and caring person with whom she is falling in love. Allison gets to know Dana as a person. We share in his thoughts, feelings, and desires. And we learn that Dana's essence as a person does not change just because "he" changes to "she." And yet, one's sex and gender undeniably do change things. For Dana, she finally feels like she is the person she was meant to be, both physically and behaviorally. For Allison, who has always been heterosexual, she must face questions about her sexual preference.

Can Allison enjoy lovemaking to a body with breasts and a vagina? Is she now a lesbian? Although, the issue of bisexuality is clearly a theme, unfortunately, it is not named.

The question is framed in either/or terms of whether Allison could possibly be gay now that her love falls on the body of a woman. Although Allison is still sexually aroused by Dana after the sex change, Allison is disturbed by both the physical and cultural changes of being with a woman. She says, "Dana's castration changed something. It no longer made sense to me to rest my head on her shoulder the way I had..., or to lay my head in her lap when we watched a movie in the den. I did that sort of thing with men....It just didn't seem like the kind a thing a woman did with another woman." Her reaction raises important questions about how much our physical bodies, as well as cultural expectations, affect who we are and how we are viewed by others.

Despite Allison's own misgivings about the relationship, she sticks by Dana in the face of harassment from the parents of her students and the school administrators. Allison knows, as a matter of fairness and human rights, that there is nothing morally wrong with her relationship or with Dana's choice to be a woman. The negative reactions of the small town community are sad and disheartening to watch, but Allison and Dana's courage and convictions are quite admirable.

Bohjalian is clearly supportive of transsexuality, but he allows, through his characters, questions and criticisms to be raised. One of the most provocative issues raised is: If it's OK to change one's sex, where do we draw the line with changing our bodies to match our chosen identities? Will, Allison's ex-husband, imagines the possibilities, "You're convinced you're a black man imprisoned inside a white guy's skin; you're absolutely

Trans-Sister continues on page 10

BECAUSE 2001: A Bisexual Odyssey

May 4-6, 2001 will be the setting of BECAUSE 2001: A Bisexual Odyssey in Milwaukee, WI at the University of Wisconsin. BECAUSE (Bisexual Empowerment Conference: A Uniting, Supportive Experience) is an annual conference held in the midwest region of the United States to provide opportunities of support, education, resources, entertainment and a sense of community for those who self-identify as bisexual, persons questioning their orientation, those who dislike labels, transgender persons and our allies. BECAUSE 2001: A Bisexual Odyssey will strive to meet your needs no matter where you are on your personal journey. Any questions, or suggestions for the conference or web page can be made by contacting: BECAUSE 2001, P.O. Box 070845, Milwaukee, WI 53207; because2001@hotmail.com; 414-299-9612.

Book Review: *Apples and Oranges: My Journey Through Sexual Identity*, by Jan Clausen, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999.

Reviewed by Fennel

First of all, this is a complex book by a complex woman. It is more the story of her life than any statement about sexual identity. The author, Jan Clausen, doesn't adopt or explore in depth the possibility of calling herself bi, instead, she takes the reader on a journey of her love life and history. She becomes involved with a man after years of partnering with a woman. When this happens, she re-evaluates the story she told herself about her history.

When she identified as a lesbian, she viewed the men in her past as a mistake made until she saw the light. But after she chooses to leave her long-term female partner for a male partner, she explains she does it because of who he is as a person (this is how many bis see their lives). She also says she finds sex with men simpler and less process-oriented and seems to find this refreshing after years of the former.

Apples and Oranges reads like a journal. It is an interesting character study and Clausen has her own twist on "the personal is political." Check it out for an absorbing read.

The Transgender Education Network

The Transgender Education Network (TEN) of JRI Health is a program dedicated to addressing the health care needs of the transgender community. The Network services include workshops, support groups, conferences, literature, resource guides, community events and a web site. Contact TEN for a copy of the first *New England Transgender Resource Guide* or check out their web site at www.jri.org/transhealth. JRI Health, TEN, 100 Boylston St., Suite 860, Boston, MA 02116. 617-988-2605, ext. 211.

Trans-Sister from page 9

sure that a gigantic error's been made....And so you go to a dermatologist to find out what can be done to make you look black." Or white. Or tall. Or short. If our society was more tolerant of differences, would there still be a need for medical transformations?

The story of *Trans-Sister Radio* is set inside the framework of a National Public Radio show. Aside from the catchy title, however, this vehicle does not add value to the novel. In fact, I was tempted to skip over the radio bits, and I found the straightforward, journalistic style of the whole book to be a little dry at times. However, these problems are small in light of the whole novel. The provocative nature of the topic and the insights into the characters make this a compelling and interesting read.

Transitions: Abby

The Buddha said the one thing you can rely on in this world is change. "Transition" seems a friendly word for life-altering decisions and conclusions. The biggest transition of my life was admitting to myself that I had an attraction to women and that I am capable of falling in love with women. My romantic relationships have primarily been with men but I'm by no means "straight." I couldn't go into a relationship with a man and not come out to him, just as I couldn't go into a relationship with a woman and not acknowledge my attraction for men.

In 1998, I quit a job that was giving me suicidal thoughts. I ended an unhealthy relationship. I gave up drugs. Though, my drug of choice now is caffeine and I drink socially.

In 1999, I visited the Cambridge Women's Center and started attending BiRap. I met some cool people and life-long friends. I attended BBWN brunches and outings when possible. Recently, because of my job hours and social life on the weekends, it has been impossible for me to attend BiRap or outings. This transition has been hard because I miss that camaraderie very much. But I do believe everything happens for a reason or lesson. In fact, my New Year's resolution was to remind myself, "It's all good." Change is inevitable and I intend to face it bravely and positively.

Bad from page 1

It has made me re-evaluate the health I took for granted when I was actively dancing, performing, and teaching — running from activity to activity in a very driven way. I literally can no longer run from activity to activity and have to be very careful not to overschedule myself. If I do overschedule, my foot will let me know loud and clear that this is too much activity and it is time to just sit, be quiet even when I don't think that is what I need.

This process also changed the content of my dance work from a very external focus of choreography, to a more internal exploration of what is really important about my life right now — healing and transformation.

During the last five years I have been slowly testing and retesting my physical capabilities, how much can I walk today? Dance today? I went from not being able to walk across my living room floor in bare feet without pain, to finally now being able to take forty minutes (about half) of a dance class without wearing shoes and other orthopedic devices. I also have accepted that setbacks are part of the process and they are not permanent and usually signal that something needs to change.

I think coming out has been a very positive transition in my life. It felt as if many small fragmented pieces of myself suddenly started to make sense within a larger picture in a way that I had not realized. When I came out to my family I had to go through an evaluation process that helped me to make peace within myself around issues that I did not know how to deal with. Deciding whom to come out to helped me to decide who was most important to me in my family. I had to be ready to accept family members' negative reactions and to view myself as a separate person with my own life to lead, regardless of how that would be viewed by my family. I am out to just about everyone in my life now and mostly found acceptance from everyone. I definitely feel less dependent on the approval of others and feel more comfortable asking for what I want and doing what is right for me. I've also met some really wonderful people in the process.

I think acceptance has been one of the most important things I have learned when going through transition. It is easy when things are difficult to wish some things were different or that things would go the way I want them to, but often it isn't realistic and I need to accept things as they are and then look for possibilities within the parameters of what is happening right now.

CALENDAR *continued from page 12*

April 29 ♦ Sunday

Biversity Brunch, 1 p.m. For this brunch we'll be trying out a new brunch location — the Lindwood Grill, at 69 Kilmarnock Street in Boston's Fenway area (very close to Thornton's). Nearest T stop is Fenway on the D branch of the Green Line.

May 1 ♦ Tuesday

BBWN Volunteer Serving at the Boston Living Center Ladies' Night, 5:30 p.m. See April 3rd.

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Topic: "Does the sexuality of your partner make a difference?" See April 6th.

May 2 ♦ Wednesday

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. See April 4th.

May 8 ♦ Tuesday

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. See April 13th.

May 9 ♦ Wednesday

Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m. See April 14th.

May 12 ♦ Saturday

Biversity Bike Ride, 10 a.m. Meet at the Alewife T station on the Red Line. We'll decide where we're going when we gather. Everyone is welcome. Call Sheeri at 617-629-9516 or email awfief@cs.brandeis.edu to RSVP. We will wait for you if we know you are coming.

May 13 ♦ Sunday

BBWN Lilac Sunday Potluck Picnic, Noon. This is the one day of the year that we can picnic in the Arnold Arboretum and enjoy all the spring blooms. We'll meet at the main gate on the Jamaica way and walk in together to find a good spot to spread out. Please bring the usual potluck dish to share, drinks, and things to sit on. Contact Ellyn if you are interested in going, 617-623-5535, nellythrustmor@aol.com.

May 15 ♦ Tuesday

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Topic: "Attitudes towards marriage and commitment ceremonies." See April 4th.

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. See April 7th.

May 16 ♦ Friday

BiWomen Submissions Deadline. This issue's theme is "Biphobia~Bi Positive." See page 2 for more ideas. Send submissions to: *BiWomen*, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA, 02140 or email to nellythrustmor@aol.com.

May 19 ♦ Saturday

Boston Youth Pride March and Festival, 1 p.m. Meet across the street from the State House around noon to show your support for GLBT youth and to march with the bi contingent. Volunteers are needed to carry the banner and staff the table. Call Wayne at 508-699-6612 or bryant@tdint.com.

Come visit BBWN
online at:

biresource.org/bbwn

*Learn about BBWN, read
snippets of the newsletter,
and find links to many
different bi resources.*

Biversity Picnic Brunch. Will coincide with the Youth Pride events. Meet at the top of the stairs leading to Boston Common across Beacon Street from the State House. Park Street on the Red and Green Lines.

May 27 ♦ Sunday

Biversity Brunch, 1 p.m. Enjoy delicious vegetarian food at Buddha's Delight in Boston's Chinatown. On Beach Street between Harrison and Washington. Nearest T is Chinatown on Orange Line.

Bisexual People of Color Potluck, 5-7 p.m. This month's gathering is a TBA event. Leave a message at 617-424-9595 for information or to make a suggestion. See April 22nd.

May 27 ♦ Tuesday

BiWomen mailing, 7-9 p.m. at the Bi Office at 29 Stanhope St. Can you say label, stuff, and seal? Join us. Socialize during and after.

Biversity Boston is the mixed gender bisexual Network of Greater Boston.

Ongoing Events

4th Sundays: Bi People of Color Potluck, 5-7 p.m. For information, call and leave a message at 617-424-9595.

Wednesdays:

Gendertalk, 8:30-9:30 p.m. on WMBR 88.1 FM. Deals with transgender and queer issues.

Women's Club Nights

Thursdays: Dyke Night at the Midway Cafe, 3496 Washington Street in Jamaica Plain.

Saturdays: Lava Bar in Kenmore Square, 575 Commonwealth Ave. at the Howard Johnson's.

**BiWomen
wants you!!!**



SUBSCRIPTION RATE

for *BiWomen*
(sliding scale)

___ \$0-\$20 (pay what you can)
___ \$20-\$30 (suggested)
___ \$30-\$100 Extra Special Donor

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ADDRESS _____
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BBWN, P.O. BOX 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140

The "Bi Office"

is the Bisexual Resource Center, located at 29 Stanhope Street, on the fourth floor of the Living Center. For info call 617-424-9595.

Ongoing Events

Saturdays:

Coming Out Discussion for Women of all ages..

11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge.

1st & 3rd

Tuesdays:

Bi Women's Rap, 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the

Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. For info and discussion topics call 617-354-8807.

2nd Tuesdays:

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. Info: 617-354-8807.

1st & 3rd

Thursdays:

Bi Women's Resource & Support Group, 7 p.m. at the Women's Health Consortium, 29 Vaughan Mall, Portsmouth, NH. For info call 603-431-1669 or contact Sue Corcoran at schmoo@nh.ultranet.com.

CALENDAR

April 3 ♦ Tuesday

BBWN Volunteer Serving at the Boston Living Center Ladies' Night, 5:30 p.m. Help serve the women clients at the Living Center's Ladies Night Dinner in the second floor cafeteria. Your own meal is provided for you, too. Call Ellyn to volunteer, 617-623-5535. 29 Stanhope St., Boston. Nearest T is the Back Bay Orange Line Station.

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. A discussion group for bisexual, bi-friendly, and questioning women. Topic: "Sex Positive/Pornography: Political Views and Personal Tastes." Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., 617-354-8807.

April 4 ♦ Wednesday

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. An informal support group for people who think they may be bisexual or attracted to more than one sex. A small donation is requested to help pay for the space. The group meets at the Bisexual Resource Center at 29 Stanhope St. in Boston. Call 617-424-9595 for info.

April 10 ♦ Tuesday

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. Call 617-354-8807 for directions.

April 11 ♦ Wednesday

Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m. All bi community members welcome to attend. The meeting is at 29 Stanhope St. in Back Bay.

April 14 ♦ Saturday

BBWN Potluck Brunch, noon. We'll meet at Lynne's in Somerville for the usual schmoozing and eating and then watch "A Girl Thing," a one-hour segment of a Showtime movie with a bi/lesbian theme. Email Lynne for directions at gelana@gis.net or phone her at 617-629-3170.

April 17 ♦ Tuesday

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. See April 4th.

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Video Night. See April 3rd.

April 19 ♦ Thursday

Volunteer Orientation for the Cambridge Women's Center, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Tour the center, learn about the center's programs and volunteer opportunities. Call 617-354-8807.

April 21 ♦ Saturday

Bayard Rustin Breakfast, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Annual breakfast for GLBT people of color and their friends, held at the JFK Library. Keith Boykin is the keynote speaker and Zili Roots will provide the entertainment. No charge.

Biversity Brunch, 11:30 a.m. Brunch will be at Doyle's at 3484 Washington Street in Jamaica Plain, between the Green Street and Forest Hills stops on the Orange Line.

BBWN Brunch and Hike in the Medford Fells, noon. Meet at Andrea's in Somerville for a brunch and then those who are interested will carpool over to the Medford Fells for a walk. If it's lousy weather, we'll still brunch. Call Andrea for details and directions, 617-623-6143.

The Dinner Party 2001. Benefiting the Women's Care Fund at Fenway Community Health, an evening with dinner, dancing, and entertainment at the Marriot Hotel, Copley Place. Tickets are \$125. For info call 617-267-8862 or mbarber@fenwayhealth.org.

April 22 ♦ Sunday

Biversity Bike Ride, 10:00 a.m. First of the season! We'll do the Minuteman bike trail, starting from Alewife T on the Red Line. Expected length 20+ miles, 3+ hours. Call Sheeri at 617-629-9516 or email awfief@cs.brandeis.edu to RSVP. We will wait for you if we know you are coming.

Bisexual People of Color Gathering, 5-7 p.m. Whether you are Asian, Latino, Native American, African American, Caribbean, East Indian, biracial, or of mixed heritage, all diverse ethnicities and gender identities are welcome. We will gather at the food court at the Prudential Center for food, good company, good conversation, and getting reconnected with each other. Prudential or Hynes T stops on the Green Line are closes. Call John for info, 617-983-8788.

April 27 ♦ Friday

Biversity Movie and Dinner Out, 6:30 p.m. We'll meet at Kendall Square Cinema, choose a show, buy tickets, grab some dinner nearby, and watch the movie together.

Show your VISIBILITY with buttons!!

- ♦ If God had meant for people to be bisexual there would be two sexes.
- ♦ I'm bisexual and I'm NOT attracted to you.
- ♦ Racism, Sexism, Homophobia - Recognize the Connections.
- ♦ Bisexual Pride
- ♦ VISIBILITY

\$2.00 per button (includes postage) to: BBWN, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140.

CALENDAR continues on page 11

Biphobia ~ Bi Positive

Don't Take My Fence Away

By Vivienne Esrig

I had just broken up with my boyfriend of three years, and I was upset. I was talking to my mother, trying to come out to her over the telephone. Come out as what, I'm not sure... just come out. My mother lives in California; I live in Boston. The year was 1991.

This boyfriend had been my first true love, more or less. I was young; what did I know about love? And now I was talking to my mother and trying to be casual about dropping the hint that the next person I dated might not have a penis.

Today I am not even sure just when this conversation happened. Was it before I discovered my interest in a particular female friend or was it after? It doesn't really matter. I had been intrigued sexually by women for a long time but had never acted on it, unless you count a little making out. I don't know if making out counts.

It's amazing the things you remember over the years. I wonder why it is that I can vividly recall something completely irrelevant like what I wore to work the day it rained last month but I can't remember where I put my car keys ten minutes ago. But as the years pass, I realize that certain pieces I remember that seemed to have no special significance at the time, end up being profound. Profound to me anyway...but I suppose inherent in the profound is that subjective perspective. May not be profound to you...it's profound to me.

So my mother was trying to tell me that everything would be okay and while my heart might be breaking now I would soon see other people. As a matter of fact, why didn't I start that process right now?

"You'll meet a nice guy," she says.

And I take a deep breath and say, "Well, I'm not sure if it will be a nice guy or a nice girl..."

She hesitates, and in a very stern voice, she says, "Well, you need to decide. You can't stay on the fence."

And I say — because I had always been a rebellious child and continued to be a rebellious

Fence continues on page 7



Internalized Biphobia

By Robyn Ochs

Biphobia does not come only from the outside. Internalized biphobia can be powerful, sometimes overpowering, and the experience of isolation, illegitimacy, shame, and confusion felt by many bisexuals can be disempowering, even disabling.

Even today, with modest improvements in this area, there are few role models available to us. Due to bisexual invisibility and the paucity of bisexual role models or bisexual community, most bisexuals develop and maintain our bisexual identities in isolation.

Most bisexuals spend a majority of our time in the community that corresponds with the sex and sexual orientation of our romantic partner. This can result in a sense of discontinuity if we change partners and our partner is of a different sex or if we shift back and forth between two differing communities over time. Other bisexuals have a strong social affiliation with either a heterosexual, lesbian, or gay community. This can result in another set of conflicts: if our partner is not of the "correct" sex, then we may feel guilt or shame for having

Biphobia continues on page 4

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

BRC Celebrates.....	3
Not a Phase.....	5
Missing Bi Community.....	6
North American Bi Conference.....	7
Research Ignores Bisexuality.....	8
Poetry.....	9
Famous Bi People..	10
Calendar.....	11-12

Volunteers of the Month

Gail

Robyn Ochs

Denise

John Vines

Elena O'Malley

Amatul Hannan

Kevin Block-Schwenk

Kelley

Arthur

Dana

Woody

Charles

Debbie Block-Schwenk

Wayne Bryant

And many more
fabulous people!
You know who
you are!

BiWomen is published bi-monthly.

Editor:

Ellyn Ruthstrom

Proofreader:

Printed on
recycled paper

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay people within the larger society.

We're Not Going Away!

It's Pride season, folks! Come out, come out, wherever you are. The high holy day is upon us. If you are in the Boston area, hope to see you out on June 9th. (Check the calendar on page 12 for details of local events.) If you are in another area of the country (or the world), I hope you'll be kicking up your heels on the appropriate dates for your area!

Around this time of year I often hear hesitation from some people in bi groups, especially those new to the community, to be a part of a Pride celebration. And I think that some of the reasons for this hesitancy stem from part of this issue's theme: biphobia. Sometimes I think it's just the title; most people refer to the event as "Gay Pride." So if you don't identify as gay you don't think you belong. Some of it can come from the greater gay and lesbian community who kind of forget that bisexual and transgender have been added to most pride celebrations, so when it is discussed publicly you could feel invisible. And, some of it could come from that internalized biphobia that Robyn Ochs writes about on page 1. Maybe you don't feel "queer enough." Well, be assured, you are and there are plenty of other bis who will be marching in the parade as well, even if they are not identifiable as such.

Bi activism over the last ten plus years has affected Pride celebrations for many of us. At one of my first Pride experiences in Northampton in 1991 there was a huge brouhaha when the Pride Committee removed the word bisexual from the title of the parade. Queer Nation (a now defunct radical queer group) took over the beginning of the parade carrying a large banner saying "Bisexual" on it. At the main rally we listened to (and yelled "Shame!" at) speeches by lesbians who felt bi presence diluted the political nature of Pride.

Now corporate sponsors are blamed for that. (Phew, one less thing to be blamed for.) Now when I march in Boston Pride, I feel the majority of people cheer happily as the bi contingent goes by. You'll see a sour face or two occasionally, but many more understand that we are out and proud and here to stay. ▼

NEXT IN *BiWOMEN*

The *BiWomen* theme for
August/September is:

Out in Nature

Are you an outdoorswoman? Do you love hiking, climbing, camping, etc? What have you experienced as a queer woman out in the wilds? Share your favorite outdoor spots and activities.

Photos encouraged.

Deadline: July 18, 2001

FUTURE ISSUES IN 2001

October/November
Polyamory

December/January
Being Bi in the Boonies

PLEASE SUBMIT TO *BiWOMEN* !

Send articles, calendar entries, letters,
artwork, photos,
news, and views to:

BiWomen

P.O. Box 400639

Cambridge, MA 02140

or via e-mail to

NellyThrustmor@aol.com

***If you do not want your name
published, please tell us.***

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this newsletter are copyrighted
by the authors and artists.



Before some BBWN members went off to hike in the Fells on a beautiful April afternoon, they smushed together on the couch for a photo opportunity. Check out the calendar on pages 11-12 for details of upcoming brunches and events.

BBWN's Bi Pride Brunch

The tradition continues! Celebrating Pride in the Boston bi community begins with the annual BBWN sponsored Bi Pride Brunch. As always, it will be held at the Community Church on Copley Square on the morning of Saturday, June 9th, 9-11:30 a.m. The Bi Brunch is a great place to see old friends, make new ones, have some good food, and get psyched for the march. We ask for a \$5-10 sliding scale donation to cover the costs and hopefully make a little for the BBWN treasury. Nearest T stop is Copley on the Green Line. Fabulous bi T-shirts, Resource Guides, buttons, and jewelry will be available, along with good food to get ready to march. Then join the bi contingent and march off at noon for the Boston Common!

BRC Celebrates the Fourth Edition of the *Bi Resource Guide*

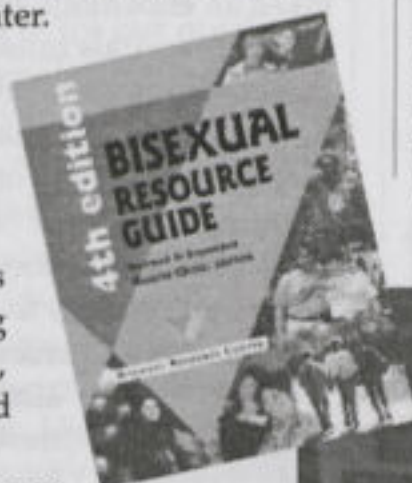
On May 10th, the Bisexual Resource Center (BRC) and the New England Leather Alliance (NELA) co-sponsored a kick-off party for the fourth edition of the *Bisexual Resource Guide* at the Boston Living Center. With hors d'oeuvres from Rebecca's and a homemade bisexual cake to celebrate, members of the local bi and leather communities came and enjoyed seeing the beautiful new Guide, meeting new people, and seeing old friends.

Ellyn Ruthstrom, BRC board member, emceed the short program during which the many local people and those far afield were thanked for their involvement with the Guide. The editor, Robyn Ochs, was thanked for being mistress of the Guide through the thirteen incarnations leading up to this edition. Ochs also took the opportunity to individually thank many of the volunteers who were present who helped her with various tasks along the way. Alan Hamilton, current BRC board president informed the group of about 50 people that the BRC is busily raising money in the hopes of funding a staff position and asked those who could to please consider a donation.

But the focus of the event was definitely a social one. There was a

wonderful spirit to the gathering, lots of new faces, and many made the quick trip up to the fourth floor to see the new and improved Bisexual Resource Center office. A great night to celebrate our community both near and far. ▽

To purchase the Bisexual Resource Guide for the special online price of \$12.95 (\$1 off retail), visit www.biresource.org. Or call your local bookstore and ask that they stock it.



Guide volunteers who were present at the Guide Kick-Off Party: (l to r back) unidentified (sorry!), Debbie Block-Schwenk, Arthur Cohen, David Rothcheck, Melissa Kulig, Linda Dyndiuk, Alan Hamilton, Wayne Bryant; (front) Linda Blair, Robyn Ochs, Ellyn Ruthstrom

Transcending Boundaries

The First Northeast Bisexual and Transgender Conference, entitled "Transcending Boundaries" will be held in New Haven, Connecticut on October 19-21, 2001. The conference will explore the individual interests of both bi and trans communities, and will also seek how to bring together the two communities on common issues. Bi and trans people are invited as are interested allies. There will also be social activities such as dances and brunches to provide some time for getting to know new people, networking, and relaxing. Check out the website for the conference at www.transcendingboundaries.org. Register by September 30th for \$35.

Biphobia from page 1

"betrayed" our friends and community. Because of these potential difficulties, many people privately identify as bisexual but, to avoid conflict and preserve their ties to a treasured community, choose to identify publicly as lesbian, gay, or straight or to stay silent, allowing others to presume that they do, further contributing to bisexual invisibility.

Therefore, it is not surprising that some bisexuals feel that their bisexual desire is more a burden than a gift. They may feel a pressure or a wish to make a choice between heterosexuality and homosexuality to make their lives easier and avoid internal and external conflict. Many desire the ease they imagine would come with having one clear, fixed, socially acceptable identity.

The behavior of individual bi people, as members of a stigmatized group, is frequently seen as representative of all bisexuals. Thus, a bi-identified person may feel a sense of shame when any bisexual person behaves in such a way as to reinforce negative stereotypes of bisexual people. And we can feel an even more profound sense of shame when our own behavior happens to mirror one of the existing stereotypes of bisexuals (such as practicing polyamory, or leaving one relationship for another). Although some bisexual people do behave in ways that conform to negative stereotypes about bisexuals, it is actually the dynamics of prejudice that cause others to use such actions to generalize their stereotyping and prejudicial behavior to an entire group.

Ironically, bisexual individuals in monogamous relationships may also experience difficulties, feeling that their maintenance of a bisexual identity constitutes a double betrayal of both their community of primary identification (straight or gay) and of their partner. Alternatively, the bi person's partner may feel that a bi person's decision to continue to identify as bisexual, despite the fact of being in a monogamous relationship, is somehow a withholding of full commitment to the relationship and a holding on to the possibility of other relationships. This overlooks the fact that one's identity is, in actuality, separate from particular choices made about relationship involvement or monogamy.

How can a bisexual person come to a positive bisexual identity?

Understand the social dynamics of oppression and stereotyping. Get support and validation from others. Join a support group, subscribe to an email list, attend a conference, read books about bisexuality. Get a good bi-positive therapist, and find a friend (or two or twenty) to talk to.

Silence kills. I encourage bisexual people to come out as bisexual to the maximum extent that you can do so safely. Life in the closet takes an enormous toll on our emotional well-being. Bisexuals must remember that neither bisexuals nor gays and lesbians created heterosexism and that as bisexuals, we are its victims as well as potential beneficiaries. Although we must be aware that we, as bisexuals, sometimes have privileges that have been denied to gays, lesbians, and transgendered persons of any orientation, this simply calls for us to make thoughtful decisions about how to live our lives. We did not create the inequities, and we must not feel guilty for who we are; we need only be responsible for what we do. ▽

"Internalized Biphobia" is an excerpt from a longer article, "Biphobia," that is published in the new Bisexual Resource Guide, Fourth Edition. (See page 3 for details about how to purchase the Guide.) Robyn Ochs is one of the founders of BBWN and the editor of the Guide.



A few of the BBWN members who gathered for a picnic and walk through the Arnold Arboretum on Lilac Sunday, May 13th.

It's Not a "Phase"—It's Life!

By Ellyn Ruthstrom

Which stereotype of bisexuals gets you the most irritated? *We just can't make up our minds. We sleep with anything that moves. We are gay people who are too scared to come out. We are straight people who just want to experiment.* One of the most common stereotypes is "It's only a phase." And my response to this is, yes, it can be for some people. Usually the bi "phase" is experienced by gays and lesbians as they make their own journey into the queer community. And there are some people who initially identify as lesbian or gay and later define as bisexual — so their "phase" was being gay, something not usually noted in the queer world. But bi identity itself should not be negated simply because some people find it a useful staging ground to understanding their sexuality.

Another aspect of this "phase" issue is that bis are accused of "using" gay/lesbian space for our own purposes and then retreat to our so-called "straight" lives when we want to. If you believe this perspective, then we don't have any bi community of our own and always need queer space to revel in for our quickies because we don't make any lasting (sexual or not) relationships with gays and lesbians. In other words, we have no reason to be in queer space unless we are schtupping them.

But the most frustrating point for me about the allegation that bis use queer space is that I have found that lesbians often "use" bi space for their own coming out process and we don't complain about that. I have seen countless women who later identify as lesbian come into the bi women's community as they struggle with their own coming out process. (I will only speak for the bi women's community as I don't know if bi men's community experiences the same thing with gay men.) Many need a space to discuss their feelings for women, but they are often experiencing a great deal of internalized homophobia and are afraid of venturing directly into lesbian space.

There was a recent example of this on *ER* that many people were talking about. Kerry Weaver started her first relationship with a woman, Susan, a psychiatrist at the hospital. They went out to dinner with a group of Susan's friends and in the course of the evening, several of the friends at the table revealed past relationships with Susan and others at the table. Kerry was very uncomfortable with the discussion and told Susan that she cared about her but she didn't want to take

on that lifestyle. This was such a realistic depiction of many women's initial contact with the lesbian community. It can feel like you have to change every aspect of your life to fit in: dress a certain way, have a certain haircut, do certain social activities, take on attitudes that are new to you, make friends with all your exgirlfriends, etc.

Bi women's space is a place to venture into a woman-centered environment where it is comfortable to discuss feelings about relationships with women and not be judged. And if women are still in relationships with men (either casual or committed) they feel they can discuss that aspect of their lives, too. Later, as some women feel more comfortable in lesbian space and find a place for themselves there, they sometimes discover that a lesbian identity is what feels right for them. And they say goodbye to bi community.

I've been involved with the Cambridge

Phase continues on page 7

Bi Positive: Peggy

It was shortly after I came out that I discovered the Cambridge Women's Center and the coming out group. It was a nice group, but I was one of the few openly bisexual women in the group. I was still married at the time, and I didn't find the support I was looking for. Some of the women were formerly married but only one other woman at the time was interested in staying in a marriage. Still, it wasn't too long after that that I started going to the Lesbian Raps. There was a Bisexual Rap, but I had become attracted to one of the women in the other group. The discussions were often interesting, and I made a number of friends in the group.

Newly out after many years in the closet, I was still uncomfortable with my newly declared bisexuality. I was open about it in the rap group, and while I do remember a few of the usual clueless remarks about bisexuality ("she sure 'looks' like a lesbian") what I took away from the group was the public affirmation of my identity as someone who was attracted to women. Boy, that was heady stuff, other women who openly validated my sexuality. What were clueless remarks in comparison to that?

Queer Aunts and Uncles Sought

The LGBT Aunts and Uncles Program seeks adult volunteers to be companions and mentors to children of LGBT parents. Aunts and Uncles spend several hours with a child every other week. The program also seeks children of LGBT parents who are interested in having an "Aunt" or "Uncle." The program is open to all LGBT families and volunteers in the Greater Boston area, with a particular focus on serving volunteers and parents of color, single parents, parents raising children of a different race or ethnicity, and same-gender parents raising opposite-gender children. For more information, please call 617-576-6788 or e-mail altfammat@msn.com.

Cut Your Hair to End Violence

Cut Your Hair at the First Annual Cut-a-Thon to raise money for The Network for Battered Lesbians and Bisexual Women which works to end abuse in lesbian, bisexual women's and transgender communities. Sunday, June 3, 12-5 p.m. at Troy Anthony Jr's Barber Shop, 1199 Cambridge St, Inman Square, Cambridge, \$10-20 sliding scale. Get your hair buzzed, spiked, trimmed, cut, shaped, or shaved! (no long hair styling) For more info call 617-695-0877 or email nblbw@erols.com.

Missing Bi Community Makes for Hard Transition

By Elle Thomas

Some moments snatch us up in a mighty maelstrom of dislocations, wrest from us habitude, humble us with the unfamiliar. Every moment is exaggerated, every thought, exhausting. Other moments flit and flutter as the gentlest zephyr, inspiring us to stretch and relax. Change can reassure or torment us. How one navigates the internal passage from fearing transitions to embracing them, and, perhaps, from acceptance to fear; this is the aspect of humanity I find most interesting — as a friend, as a writer, as a human — that temporal shift between these extremes of the pendulum.

At this moment, transitions abound in my own life. Two months ago, I relocated from the harried urban environment of coastal Massachusetts to the folksy expanse of Montana's big sky country. This new-found physical beauty I wholeheartedly embrace; the human aspect, though, is another story. In Bozeman, Montana, there is no established community for any of my passions — folk music is relegated to a weekly four-hour radio slot, and hardly a live show; the feminist movement has yet to reach this corner of the country, as collegiate women assume "feminist" is a synonym for "man-hating" and avoid the moniker like they steer clear of muddy puddles on the sidewalk; environmental

conservation is considered a radical political notion and preservation organizations struggle to attract members, while the Association of Women Hunters draws large numbers to each event.

It is, though, the queer community that I most miss. Partly, it is that many queers that I knew (and knew of) in Boston share my interest in these other liberal-

leaning causes and arts. Partly, it is my profound sense of loss for being out and proud. I miss kissing my girlfriend on the sidewalk, miss seeing women hand-in-hand every day. There are, of course, some lesbian couples here. I have noticed them at shops and in grocery stores. But, they don't hold hands, and they are careful not to look too long at each other. Even more isolating is that I do not feel totally comfortable in my own home. The straight woman who shares an apartment with my partner and I is accepting of our relationship (at least outwardly). She is, however, not simply ignorant of bisexuality — she has made my sexual "confusion" a running household joke. In Boston, I would be able to point to other examples of bis, and would have support from friends in dealing with her disrespect. In a sprawling rural town of 30,000 people, in which I am the only out bisexual, her disrespectful attitude is not easy to combat. Because, of course, here, I really am a freak. I have always been a square peg in a round hole. But, even as a teenager, I was able to connect with other misfits, and we helped each other through those times.

Through mutual folk-music friends, I recently connected with Jess, another Massachusetts-to-Montana transplant, who is also queer. She lives in a different city, 150 miles away, but recently spent an evening at my home with my partner and I. All three of us later expressed our enjoyment of that evening, of doing "lesbo" things like sipping tea and listening to "womyn's music," and good-naturedly sassing each other about being a "dyke" or a "femme." It is precisely that lack of comfort and sense of humor that is the most difficult of all my current transitions.

In this moment, I am unable to offer any words of coping strategies or wisdoms for those of you struggling with similar lifestyle transitions. It all feels too raw and overwhelming; I have no perspective on such grand changes. I have been married and divorced, come out, suffered a serious injury and worked at rehabilitation, and moved away from my home. But this — living in a space without the possibility of a community — is the most trying. It is changing me. I don't know how, exactly, but I will be a different person in a month, in a year, in a decade, because of this experience. Contributing to and reading this newsletter is one outlet that I am incredibly grateful to have. If you are yourself amid a life transition, know that there is one place where you are heard and you are welcomed — BBWN. ▼



The BRC had hundreds stop by their fabulous booth at the 7th Annual Youth Pride Day festivities at the Hatch Shell on May 19th. Stop by the booth at Boston Pride, June 9.

North American Conference on Bisexuality Set for Vancouver

The First North American Conference on Bisexuality, Gender and Sexual Diversity (NACB 2001) is being held in Vancouver, Canada, August 9-12, 2001. Focusing on North American concerns around bisexual and transgender issues, the conference will also include a BiNet USA meeting and the first meeting of BiNet Canada. Conference organizers are hoping that people who will attend the conference will be able to take advantage of being timed within a week of Vancouver's Pride festivities.

NACB 2001 has announced that the keynote speakers will be pioneering transgendered activist and author, Kate Bornstein, and eminent "guerilla theologian," Eliyahou Farajajé. Also speaking will be Fritz Klein, author of *The Bisexual Option* and founder of the American Institute of Bisexuality; and Morgan Holmes, the founder of the Intersex Society of Canada.

Bornstein is the author of *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women and the Rest of Us*, and *My Gender Workbook*, and a performance artist and activist who has performed in North America and Europe.

Rev. Dr. Eliyahou Farajajé is Dean of the Faculty and professor of History and Sociology of Religion at the Starr King School for the Ministry. His scholarly works include a book of essays he co-edited entitled *African Creative Expressions of the Divine* and "Breaking Silence: Towards and In-the-Life Thea/ology," an essay

Fence from page 1

child and I always have argued with my mother just for the sake of arguing — say (and this is the profound part): "No, I don't have to get off the fence."

I have thought about that conversation more than a few times over the past decade. I now absolutely 100% positively identify as bisexual and am convinced that I have been bisexual my entire life. It is a label that I love, one that suits me perfectly and makes so much sense, it's profound.

The universe might be mostly chaos but having this word exist in my lifetime and being able to use it to identify myself puts some order in the cosmos. It is like a really old t-shirt that has been washed no less than a million times and you want to wear it every day because it feels so good. I'm happy now. Happy that I didn't have to get off the fence—not then, not now, not ever.

How's that for Bi-Pride? ▼

published in "Black Theology, Volume II."

NACB 2001 is facilitated by a coalition of members from the Bisexual Network of British Columbia (BiNetBC). NACB 2001 will be held at the University of British Columbia Conference Centre. For more specific information on how to register or submit a workshop proposal, visit the conference website at: <http://bi.org/~binetbc/2001> or call 604-875-6336. ▼

Phase from page 5

Women's Center's BiRap and BBWN for almost seven years and in that time I have seen many a woman take this path through our community. Some stay on good terms and remain bi-positive allies within the greater queer community. Unfortunately, I have also seen some women acquire a more negative approach and try to hide their past connection to the bi community, afraid people will think they too are bi.

I point this out not out of bitterness, but out of pride in my own community that we are so accepting of people and their own process and their own individual experience. We don't react to these instances by shutting down a gate and asking for proof of biness to join us. We don't say you have to know right now what you will choose to identify as for the rest of your life. If you are happy with your identity then so are we. And if identifying as bisexual ends up being a "phase" for you then so be it, and may it be a phase that you remember fondly.

But for those of us who have been out as bi for a long time (the tenured bis, I like to call us) this ain't no phase and we ain't using nobody (that hasn't consented, thank you very much). We have a vibrant, diverse bi community that reaches around the globe (see page 3 about the new resource guide). And, many of us have long, enduring relationships with gays and lesbians and know love and acceptance of our biness in those relationships.

Sexual identity is fluid; it's individual and it is a part of the greater storyline we usually call "a life." It's not about making a static choice, it's not about getting off a fence or picking a team, and it's certainly not about living our lives so that other people feel comfortable with us (either gay or straight). It's about going through our lives with an open, honest heart and trusting that it will take us to good places and good people. It's that sort of openness that I seek and have found in bi community. ▼

Queer Radio Show Looking for Talent

"OUT-OF-PRINT" is a new monthly radio program airing Wednesday nights on WMBR 88.1 FM. The program is committed to featuring fine literary works by or pertaining to the LBGT community, in the formats of poetry, short fiction, plays, essays and relevant academic paper excerpts as well as musical performances. This live on-air program will celebrate both arts that touch on the diverse aspects of our lives, and arts that are the manifestations of our passions. For more information and submission guidelines see: ubiquitin.pages.planetout.com. Please send inquiries and all submissions to: Joyce Yang joycey@mit.edu or DJ JOY c/o Out-of-Print, WMBR Radio Station, 3 Ames Street, Cambridge, MA 02142 or Amatul Hannan at toolboxp@chickmail.com.

2001 Women's Music Festivals



June 21-24: National Women's Music Festival held at Ball State University in Muncie, IN.
Contact: NWMF, P.O. Box 1427, Indianapolis, IN 46206, 317-927-9355, nwmf@wiaonline.org, www.wiaonline.org.

June 29-July 1: Alaska Women's Music Festival held in Fairbanks, AK.
Contact: c/o Dena Ivey, P.O. Box 80164, Fairbanks, AK 99708, 907-456-2471, ivey@mosquitonet.com.

August 7-12: Michigan Women's Music Festival held near Hart, MI.
Contact: WWTMC, P.O. Box 22, Walhalla, MI 49458, 231-757-4766, www.michfest.com

August 24-26: 18th Annual Twin Oaks Women's Gathering in Louisa, VA. Contact: Twin Oaks, 138 Twin Oaks Rd, Louisa, VA 23093, 540-894-5141, gathering@twinoaks.org, www.twinoaks.org/comt/women/

Latest Research Still Ignores Bisexuality

By Pete Chvany

ABC's "Good Morning America" for May 9th featured a conversation between Diane Sawyer and Dr. Robert Spitzer, author of a controversial new study that claims some gay men and lesbians can change their sexuality if they really want to. Spitzer's findings, to be presented later the same day at the annual American Psychiatric Association meetings, have already attracted controversy and condemnation within the gay community.

As someone with a general interest in the social sciences, I'd want to review Dr. Spitzer's research carefully before deciding how sound it is and what it really means. But as a bisexual activist, I'm already qualified to discuss the public reaction and debate. It's a dumb debate, and I'm amazed the gay and lesbian community is getting suckered into it again.

Why are these studies always packaged, even by the gay community, as a question of whether homosexuals can change? Why not say "duh, bisexuals go both ways" and leave it at that?

Much more important than the question of whether homosexuals "can" change is the question of why so many people try to force others, homosexuals AND bisexuals alike, to be something we're not.

According to ABC's web site, Spitzer claims that many men and women he studied had "good heterosexual functioning," had been in stable other-sex relationships for up to a year, and rarely experienced "unwanted homosexual feelings." But we have only ABC's and Spitzer's word for it that they previously considered themselves gay or lesbian, rather than bi. Even if they did, I wouldn't necessarily take their word for it. In bisexual communities we know many people who thought they were gay or straight until they realized they were neither, or maybe both.

Bisexuals complicate the idea that anyone gets "converted" to anything.

We know how homophobes pursue such conversions. Who hasn't heard of parents or friends harping on a queer person's childhood attachments, their prom date, even their straight ex-spouse, as evidence that their same-sex attractions must be trivial or temporary, "just a phase," something they can grow out of if they try hard enough?

But homophobia isn't directed only at gay or lesbian identity. It's directed at any expression of same-sex affection or desire that

trespasses mainstream straight culture's comfort boundaries. Even heterosexuals can be victimized by homophobia if they don't behave the way someone else thinks they should.

So we shouldn't be surprised if homophobia affects bisexuals too. The surprise is persistent amnesia about the fact that bisexuals do exist and are affected.

The "ex-gay" conversion "ministries" we hear so much about attract people who are most vulnerable to our society's negative messages about sexuality. Typically, we speak of how that impacts gay people whose upbringing has preyed hardest on their self-esteem because of their same-sex attractions. But consider those of us with both same-sex and other-sex attractions. We must learn to value ourselves in a society, which claims such feelings are either impossible or inevitably dysfunctional. And sadly, it isn't only the homophobes who put forth that message. "Fence sitter," "in denial," "traitor," "confused," "tourist," "wouldn't have one as a friend," "not really one of us," "having it both ways," "don't face real oppression," "not welcome here": these are just some of the things bisexuals hear daily in gay and lesbian communities.

Small wonder if the crocodile sympathy of the "ex-gay" crowd strikes some bisexuals as a better deal. Small wonder if some even refuse to accept their own bisexuality. When gay communities don't embrace bisexuals, some bisexuals turn elsewhere for support. That's not a comment on bisexuality. It's human nature.

There are alternatives, but the gay and lesbian community rarely talks about them. There are bisexual groups and communities everywhere. Places where nobody is encouraged to deny their same-sex attractions, OR their other-sex ones, whether or not those feelings are equal in strength, whether or not they change over time.

Bisexuals are easy to find; the recently published fourth edition of the *Bisexual Resource Guide* (available at www.biresource.org) lists thousands of bisexual and bi-friendly groups around the world.

Bisexuals can, however, be overlooked. And this seems to be the standard gay and lesbian response.

Well, it's a dumb response. If the gay community can't take bisexuality seriously, sympathetic straights won't either. The chorus

of disapproval from both those sides will render the hard work of bisexual activists meaningless. Only the homophobes will be left to turn sexual diversity to their advantage.

That's the state of affairs now. How long it goes on is up to us. ▼

Pete Chvany is a bi activist from the Boston area. He is associated with the Bisexual Resource Center and writes a monthly column on bisexual issues for The Slant (www.theslant.org).

GLAAD Adds Their Opinion

(Excerpt from a Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation press release following the media response to Dr. Spitzer's "research.")

Despite generally good coverage of the Spitzer debate in "The New York Times," "The Washington Post," ABC's "Good Morning America," CNN, MSNBC and "Time," these and most other outlets did not discuss the crucial issue of bisexuality in the continuum of sexual orientation. No outlet mentioned the fact that Spitzer did not consider bisexuality in his study, nor did they discuss the logical probability that Spitzer's subjects may have been bisexual. In fact, Spitzer observations may have been the result of a shift in the behavior of bisexual people and their comfort level with same-sex attractions. (Ironically, one of the few outlets that hinted at this complexity of sexual orientation was "National Review," a conservative journal.)

Until media outlets and reporters are more comfortable discussing issues of bisexuality, bisexual invisibility will negatively impact coverage of all sexual orientation issues. GLAAD also was disappointed that some media outlets used religious spokespersons such as Jerry Falwell to discuss the scientific implications of the Spitzer study — or ignored the "science" altogether in favor of religious and/or political debate. Most outlets ran the study as a news story and presented it through the filter of its social and political ramifications, rather than analyzing the study's scientific merits (notable exceptions include "Good Morning America" and "Time"). The opinions of Spitzer's peers should have been more actively solicited in discussions of the study, especially given the controversial nature of its methods and findings within the scientific community. ▼

Let Cathy Renna, News Media Director of GLAAD, know that you appreciate their stance on this issue. Contact her at: 212-629-3322, 212-629-3225 fax, renna@glaad.org, www.glaad.org.

The Blues

By Abby Stevens

Boys look sinister in sweatshirt hoods.
Halloween?
Full moon?
Friday the 13th?
None of these.

A crowd gathers as the bus door opens.
I was here first.
I want first dibs.

On the bus,
I sit next to the sweatshirtheaded boy.
I can smell the cigaretted old lady.

I know I have a book to read but
my senses seek out
the blue of the seats,
the pling of the "Stop Requested,"
the white of hair,
the skin of a shaved head,
the lint of polyester.

Suddenly I remember his
periwinkle eyes,
his yellow cap,
his tan skin,
his unshaven face,
and I wet my lips.

A heaven of sunset blue surrounds the land,
the houses,
the bus.

I feel a burst of love in my heart
for my crush,
for the people on the bus,
for the blues.

I breathe deeply to disperse the love
throughout my entire body.
This is my truth,
my success.

Check out the June issue of *Curve* magazine with beautiful biracial, bicultural, bisexual author Rebecca Walker on the cover. When talking about her sexuality, she says "I identify as bisexual....I always had a very fluid sexuality, and thank God I was raised in a way that allowed that to happen." We're happy about that too!

Fenway's SASSIE Program

Fenway Community Health's SASSIE Program (Sisters Acquiring Safer Sex Information and Education) has been successfully running for the past four years. With an ongoing mission to provide the most up-to-date information to all women, SASSIE is dedicated to decreasing the risk of transmission of HIV and other STDs among women of color in the greater Boston area. SASSIE can lead an eight-session workshop, with different topics each week, for various groups of women. The facilitator would lead the workshops free of charge, but the participants need to commit to the full eight weeks. For more information, contact Dede Thomas at 617-927-6134, dthomas@fenwayhealth.org.

Three BBWN List Servs

There are three different BBWN list servs available to *BiWomen* readers. All three lists are very low volume, but the one with most activity is the bbwn-events list where occasionally people will post information about bi community events or other events of interest. To subscribe to the bbwn-events list, send email to bbwn-events-request@lists.home.welcomehome.org and include only the command "subscribe" (without quotes) in the body of the message. For the other two (bbwn-activist and bbwn-chat) just put their list titles before request and use the same process.

Famous Bisexual People

The following people are known to have had intimate relationships with both women and men. Fill in the blanks and see how many you can guess.

Fill in Last Names:

Anna Nicole _____
 Billie Jean _____
 Courtney _____
 D.H. _____
 Eleanor _____
 Emily _____
 Ethel _____
 Freddie _____
 Havelock _____
 Holly _____
 Isabelle _____
 James _____
 John Maynard _____
 Josephine _____
 Langston _____
 Lillian _____
 "Ma" _____
 Margaret _____
 Mick _____
 Nina _____
 Oscar _____
 Peter _____
 Rock _____
 Sal _____
 Susan B. _____
 Vincent _____
 Virginia _____
 W. Somerset _____

Fill in First Names:

_____ Bankhead
 _____ Bernhard
 _____ Bowie
 _____ Burr
 _____ Caesar
 _____ Cather
 _____ Cheever
 _____ Crawford

_____ Dean
 _____ DiFranco
 _____ Dietrich
 _____ Flynn
 _____ Forbes
 _____ Garbo
 _____ Garland
 _____ Hansberry
 _____ Heche
 _____ Ireland
 _____ John
 _____ Jolie
 _____ Joplin
 _____ Kaye
 _____ Kirkland
 _____ McCullers
 _____ McKuen
 _____ Millet
 _____ Navratilova
 _____ Nijinsky
 _____ Nin
 _____ O'Keefe
 _____ Olivier
 _____ Power
 _____ Redgrave
 _____ Rich
 _____ Rodman
 _____ Sackville-West
 _____ Shakespeare
 _____ Smith
 _____ Sprinkle
 _____ St. Vincent Millay
 _____ Stanwyck
 _____ Townsend
 _____ Valentino

Famous Bisexual People is reprinted with the permission of Rhonda Romaine Snyder. It was previously printed in Seattle's Bisexual Women's Network Newsletter, *North Bi Northwest*.

CALENDAR *continued from page 12*

June 16 ♦ Saturday

Biversity Brunch, 11:30 a.m. Brunch at the fabulous Johnny D's on Holland Street in Davis Square, Somerville. Right across from the Davis Square, Red Line stop.

June 19 ♦ Tuesday

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. See June 6th.

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Topic: "Seduction: What Works On You? What Do You Use?" See June 5th.

June 20 ♦ Wednesday

Bi Coffee and BiHealth, 7 p.m. Biversity and BiHealth will be teaming up for a social event and to distribute bisexual health information at the Diesel Cafe in Davis Square. Come join in the fun and the educational opportunity. Diesel is located at 257 Elm Street in Somerville. T stop is Davis on the Red Line.



June 23 ♦

Sunday

Biversity Brunch, 1 p.m. Ethiopian food will be shared at Addis Red Sea, 544 Tremont Street in Boston's South End. Near the Boston Center for the Arts. Nearest T stop is Back Bay on the Orange Line.

Bi People of Color Gathering. The group will be on hiatus for the summer. Keep your eye out for activities in the fall.

July 3 ♦ Tuesday

Bi Rap at the Women's Center. THERE WILL NOT BE A RAP THIS WEEK DUE TO THE HOLIDAY.

July 4 ♦ Wednesday

Coming Out as Bisexual. THERE WILL NOT BE A COMING OUT GROUP THIS WEEK DUE TO THE HOLIDAY.

July 7 ♦ Saturday

Naturist Swimming Trip at The Ledges, 9 a.m. We'll be car-pooling to The Ledges clothing-optional swimming site in southern Vermont. Meet at the bi office at 29 Stanhope Street in Boston. Nearest T stop is Back Bay on the Orange Line. Bring a towel, something to eat, and sunscreen.

July 10 ♦ Tuesday

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. See June 12th.

July 11 ♦ Wednesday

Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m. See June 13th.

July 17 ♦ Tuesday

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Call for topic, 617-354-8807. See June 5th.

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. See June 6th.

July 18 ♦ Wednesday

BiWomen Submissions

Deadline. This issue's theme is "Out in Nature." See page 2 for more ideas. Send submissions to:

BiWomen, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA, 02140 or e-mail to nellythrustmor@aol.com.



July 21 ♦ Saturday

Biversity Brunch, 11:30 a.m. The annual summer brunch outing at AuBon Pain in Harvard Square, Cambridge. Nearest T stop is Harvard Square on the Red Line.

July 25 ♦ Wednesday

Bi Coffee and BiHealth, 7 p.m. Biversity and BiHealth will be teaming up for a social event and to distribute bisexual health information at the Diesel Cafe in Davis Square. Come join in the fun and the educational opportunity. Diesel is located at 257 Elm Street in Somerville. T stop is Davis on the Red Line.

July 29 ♦ Sunday

Biversity Brunch, 1 p.m. Brunch will be at Baja Cafe, 109 Dartmouth Street in Boston, about half a block from Back Bay Station (Orange Line) on the same side of the street.

July 31 ♦ Tuesday

BiWomen mailing, 7-9 p.m. at the Bi Office at 29 Stanhope St. Can you say label, stuff, and seal? Join us on the fourth floor of the Living Center. Socialize during and after when we'll drop by Club Cafe for something to soothe you at the end of the day.

Biversity Boston is the mixed gender bisexual Network of Greater Boston.

Ongoing Events

4th Sundays: Bi People of Color Potluck. NOTE: The PoC Potluck is on hiatus for the summer.

Wednesdays:

Gendertalk, 8:30-9:30 p.m. on WMBR 88.1 FM. Deals with transgender and queer issues.

Women's Club Nights

Thursdays: Dyke Night at the Midway Cafe, 3496 Washington Street in Jamaica Plain.

Saturdays: Lava Bar in Kenmore Square, 575 Commonwealth Ave. at the Howard Johnson's.

BiWomen wants you!!!



SUBSCRIPTION RATE

for BiWomen
(sliding scale)

___ \$0-\$20 (pay what you can)

___ \$20-\$30 (suggested)

___ \$30-\$100 Extra Special Donor

___ Renewal

___ New Subscriber

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE (Optional) _____

BBWN, P.O. BOX 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140

The "Bi Office"

is the Bisexual Resource Center, located at 29 Stanhope Street, behind Club Cafe, right next door to Bertucci's and just down the street from the Hard Rock Cafe. For info call 617-424-9595.

Ongoing Events

1st & 3rd

Tuesdays:

Bi Women's Rap. 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. For info and discussion topics call 617-354-8807.

2nd Tuesdays:

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. Info: 617-354-8807.

1st & 3rd

Thursdays:

Bi Women's Resource & Support Group. 7 p.m. at the Women's Health Consortium, 29 Vaughan Mall, Portsmouth, NH. For info call 603-431-1669 or contact Sue Corcoran at schmoo@nh.ultranet.com.

CALENDAR

June 1 - 2 ♦ Friday & Saturday

Boston Women's Rainbow Chorus, 8 p.m. Boston's chorus for lesbians, bisexual women, and their allies presents "Woman to Woman." At the Central Congregational Church, 85 Seaverns Avenue, Jamaica Plain. Tickets \$10-25; to order, call 617-424-8900 or visit www.bgmc.org.

June 5 ♦ Tuesday

BBWN Volunteer Serving at the Boston Living Center Ladies' Night, 5:30 p.m. Help serve the women clients at the Living Center's Ladies Night Dinner in the second floor cafeteria. Your own meal is provided for you, too. 29 Stanhope St., Boston. Nearest T is the Back Bay Orange Line Station. Call Ellyn to volunteer, 617-623-5535.

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. A discussion group for bisexual, bi-friendly, and questioning women. Topic: "Sex & Sexuality Education in Schools/Families." Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., 617-354-8807.

June 6 ♦ Wednesday

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. An informal support group for people who think they may be bisexual or attracted to more than one sex. A small donation is requested to help pay for the space. The group meets at the Bisexual Resource Center at 29 Stanhope St. in Boston. Call 617-424-9595 for info.

June 8 ♦ Friday

Boston's Dyke March, 7 p.m. Meet in front of the Boston Public Library on Boylston Street. This year's theme is "Celebrating Our Bodies" and will feature the biggest dyke puppet Boston has ever seen. There will be dancing, singing, chanting, and whathaveyou. The post march rally will take place at the gazebo in the Boston Commons and will include speakers who address our bodies in relation to race, reproduction, body image, sexuality, and trans issues. Email to Dykemarch@gurlmail.com or visit www.butchdykeboy.com/dykemarch.

June 9 ♦ Saturday

BBWN Bi Pride Brunch, 9-11:30 a.m. Come on out Pride morning to the annual Bi Brunch at the Community Church of Boston at Copley Square, 565 Boylston Street. We ask for a \$5-10 donation at the door and you get good food and good bi company to psyche you up for the march. Please call Ellyn at 617-623-5535 if you would like to help volunteer for this event, or email her at nellythrustmor@aol.com.

Boston Pride!!!! Noon at Copley Square. If you can't make it to the Brunch to find the bi contingent then get to Copley and find the information table with the march order. Or just wait along the parade route and jump in when you see us. The awesome BRC booth will again grace the Common with t-shirts, Resource Guides, buttons, Bi Health info, and much more. Stop by and say "Hi, bi!"



June 12 ♦ Tuesday

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. Meets on the second Tuesday of each month. Call 617-354-8807 for directions.

June 13 ♦ Wednesday

Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m. All bi community members welcome to attend. The meeting is on the fourth floor of the Boston Living Center, 29 Stanhope St. in Back Bay.

June 14 - 15 ♦ Thursday & Friday

Dyke Night's Drag King Show, 9:00 p.m. If you haven't seen the

Drag King shows at the Midway yet try to be there for one of these two nights. Lots of creative and sexy acts by local

talent. Try to recognize people you know! Meet people you don't know! And this time there will be The House of Ma, a professional drag king group, visiting from Gainesville, Florida. Dyke Nights are held at the Midway Cafe, 3496 Washington Street, Jamaica Plain. \$10 cover, 21+, dancing after the show until 2 a.m.



Show your VISIBILITY with buttons!!

- ♦ If God had meant for people to be bisexual there would be two sexes.
- ♦ I'm bisexual and I'm NOT attracted to you.
- ♦ Racism, Sexism, Homophobia - Recognize the Connections.
- ♦ Bisexual Pride
- ♦ VISIBILITY

\$2.00 per button (includes postage) to: BBWN, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140.

CALENDAR continues on page 11

Out in Nature



Photo by Ellyn Ruthstrom

In My Backyard

By Abby Stevens

I was asked recently what my favorite place in the whole world is, and I have to say it's my backyard. I am truly blessed by God and Goddess to have such a lush, green back yard, especially in the city of Boston. I purposely let certain areas get overgrown for that jungle look and for my fluffy, black and silver cat, Pookie. I love sitting on my back steps and watching his poofy behind slowly disappear behind the tall grass, innocuous ferny weeds and enormous blackberry bush. He loves knowing he has a cool hiding place in the summer.

Pookie recently brought home a friend. She is (I checked and she's a she) a young, sleek, slim, elegant black cat with a flea collar, which indicates she does have a family who takes care of her. She's such a frequent guest, I've named her Blackie. She and Pookie sniff noses and play together. They chase each other and get lost in the greenery. She's not afraid of people and welcomes being petted and picked up. Both make wonderful photographic subjects.

My backyard provides such a respite from the outside world. I can pray there or meditate. I've

Backyard continues on page 5

Nature is a M.I.L.F. *

By Dan Taylor

When I tell other queers that I'm Pagan, I often hear how typical it is for lesbians to turn to a female-based theology. When I tell other Pagans that I'm queer, I often hear how difficult it must be to reconcile a hetero-based tradition with my own sexuality. And when I tell my mom all this, she has nearly as hard a time stifling her laughter as I do.

You see, I was raised Pagan. But when I say Pagan, please understand that that's slightly less specific than saying "monotheistic." Some pagans worship a goddess figure. Others worship a god and goddess. There are some that worship many. I've even met one that, as far as I could tell, worshipped herself. The only factor the various traditions have in common (and I know there are exceptions, so please don't take offense) is that most of them center on nature, in one way or another.

So the question that has my mother

Nature continues on page 5

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

BBWN Financial Statement.....	3
Bi Pride.....	3
Boston Born.....	4
Poetry.....	5, 7
Queer Outdoors Groups.....	6
Cartoon.....	6
Bi News.....	7
Trans Inclusion.....	8
Book Review.....	9
Allies Project.....	10
Out on the Edge....	10
Calendar.....	11-12

Volunteers of the Month

Gail

Robyn Ochs

Denise

John Vines

Elena O'Malley

Marshall

Pepper

Dorian

Sheeri

Debbie Block-Schwenk

Kate Griffin

Alan Hamilton

And especially all the fabulous people who volunteered at the Pride events! You know who you are!

BiWomen is published bi-monthly.

Editor:

Ellyn Ruthstrom

Proofreader:

Printed on recycled paper

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay people within the larger society.

Bi All Year Round


Summer is ebbing. Only one more month before Labor Day marks the end of vacation season, beginning of school, football, etc. The hubbub and glow of Pride activities have died down — but we are still bi!

Pride always brings out a wonderful array of helpful volunteers who make the occasions really spirited and run smoothly. However, our community functions all year round and needs your support at times besides Pride. Coming up on September 23rd is Celebrate Bisexuality Day, another great time of celebration and of organization. If you are interested in helping out with this event, please contact Ellyn Ruthstrom at nellythrustmor@aol.com or Marshall Miller at mmiller@fenwayhealth.org.

BBWN has many ways you can be a part of the organization. Contributing your writing or artwork to the newsletter is one way. Helping stuff and mail the newsletter is another. In fact, we are in need of a new Newsletter Mailing Diva (or two to share the task) to make sure the mailing gets done just six times a year.

We are also looking for a new logo for the organization, (see the sidebar on page 9) so let your creativity run wild for us. Your design will grace these pages and maybe some t-shirts and buttons, too.

You can also host a brunch at your home — one of the most fun ways of keeping BBWN a great place to meet other bi women. Please let me know if this interests you so I can include it in the next calendar. You can call me at 617-623-5535 or e-mail me at nellythrustmor@aol.com.

And check out the calendar on page 11-12 for upcoming events that you may want to participate in. There are also regularly scheduled women's groups listed that may be good resources for you. We are lucky to be in Boston with such a vibrant bi community. And that vibrancy comes from YOU! 

Ellyn Ruthstrom

NEXT IN *BiWOMEN*

The *BiWomen* theme for October/November is:

Polyamory

Have you loved or do you love more than one person at the same time? Have you chosen to live with more than one lover at the same time?

Have you built a polyamorous family? Or is it the last thing you would ever want to do? Share your experiences and your thoughts.

Deadline: September 14, 2001

FUTURE ISSUES IN 2001

December/January
Being Bi in the Boonies

February/March
Spirituality

PLEASE SUBMIT TO *BiWOMEN* !

Send articles, calendar entries, letters, artwork, photos, news, and views to:

BiWomen

P.O. Box 400639

Cambridge, MA 02140

or via e-mail to

NellyThrustmor@aol.com

If you do not want your name published, please tell us.

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BBWN Financial Statement: January 1 - June 30, 2001

Balance forward 1/1/01: \$1694.26

Expenses

Printing 1069.75
Postal fees & postage 705.73
Supplies 268.25
Merchandise purchased 83.25
Event expenses 256.47
Bulk mail permit fee 125.00
Total expenses \$2508.45

Income

Dues 895.00
Merchandise 687.18
Bank Interest 6.63

Donations 212.00

Event income 648.00

Total income: \$2448.81

Balance as of 6/30/01 \$1634.62

Treasurer's comments: Please consider making a donation to BBWN. Checks can be sent to BBWN or, if you wish your donation to be tax deductible, you may channel it through our parent organization, BRC (P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge MA 02140) — be sure to put "for BBWN" in the comment line.

Submitted by Robyn Ochs, Treasurer for BBWN, 6/30/01



International Celebrate Bisexuality Day!!!

September 23rd will be the Third Annual CBD celebration. Last year's event at the Harriet Tubman House was loads of fun; two years ago we had Club Cafe hopping. We're planning another great event for this year's celebration, but the details aren't all in place yet. For more information, call Marshall at 617-927-6032, email mmiller@fenwayhealth.org or visit the BRC webpage for news, www.biresource.org. Don't miss out on this, it's a great time to come out and flex your bi pride!

Bi Pride Season Brings Us Out Each Year

By Ellyn Ruthstrom

Pride season is a busy time for queer communities around the country — and around the world. And Boston has its own array of activities to keep us hopping through May and June. Youth Pride was another great success this year, as mentioned in the last issue. And in June we had the Dyke March, the Pre-Pride Bi Brunch, and Boston Pride.

This year's Pride activities were kicked off on Friday evening at the Dyke March. Starting at Copley Square, hundreds of women paraded down Boylston to the Commons behind what the organizers claimed was "the largest dyke puppet in the world."

BBWN's Robyn Ochs was one of the featured speakers for an evening that focused on "Celebrating Our Bodies." Ochs told the crowd, "I want to be in a community where difference is valued; a community that values ALL of our bodies, whether they are large or small or somewhere in between; a community capable of welcoming people of all different sexual orientations and genders." Ochs noted that



The Dyke Puppet resting at the gazebo on the Commons.

"The organizers of events such as the Dyke March, many student and youth groups, and some community groups — like SpeakOut and the Lesbian Avengers — are really embracing the beautiful diversity that exists among us."

Hanne Blank, another out bi woman and author of *Big Big Love: A Sourcebook on Sex for People of Size and Those Who Love Them*; Letta Neely, noted poet and activist; and Stacey Montgomery, a trans activist, all spoke at the gazebo at the Commons.

Saturday morning the annual Pre-Pride brunch was sponsored by BBWN at the Community

Church of Boston right on Copley Square. An amazing contingent of volunteers assisted with the set up, food preparation, door greeting, and clean up. People dropped by and schmoozed for a while and then headed out to the rest of the Pride activities being held. The bi contingent marching with the Bisexual Resource Center banner was ener-

Pride continues on page 9

Bi/Lesbian Survey

Bisexual and lesbian women are wanted to complete an anonymous survey. The survey focuses on lesbian/bisexual identity and past and current relationships with other women. It takes about twenty minutes to complete. Any woman age eighteen or older who has ever dated or had an intimate relationship with another woman is eligible to participate. All participants can receive a summary of the results by sending their name and address separately to the address below. To obtain one survey or more please reply with your name and address to: Kimberly Balsam, M.S., Department of Psychology, John Dewey Hall, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405; lesbisurvey@aol.com; 802-656-4265.

Boston Born — Then Transplanted

By Steph Miserlis

It's a different world here in Santa Fe. Dry, sunny, and hot. Lots of browns, rusts, and sages. Physically, wide and more open. There's a different kind of pace, or way of being; people are somehow more independent, more transient, and slower moving. I wait in line at the local grocery store, and the check-out clerk seems to intentionally move in slug mode. I could have gone to the Winter Hill Post Office, dropped off my books at the Highland Street Library, and had breakfast at Kelly's by the time the guy figures out how to put some apples in a paper bag.

There are other differences. I drive down the highway towards Taos, and instead of seeing a plastic Star Market bag floating by, I see a Tumbleweed blow across the highway. It actually tumbles. I go for a walk by the local public library and see a lizard skittering by. Frozen in my track, I just stare dumbfounded at how incredibly different and fast the thing moved. Instead of seeing tall deeply rooted powerful oaks, or lean elegant maples, I see squat scruffy gray-green bushes just sitting on top of brown dirt, like they could be blown off with a strong sneeze. I so deeply miss the sea that I sometimes smell it, like some phantom-missing limb. Getting used to my new life down here is one thing, adjusting to the non-Boston community is entirely another. But for me, the most dramatic and visible change is the environment. So — to get used to this world, I decided to try hiking.

On my first hikes, I was in total Boston mode. Donning my Martha's Vineyard Black Dog t-shirt, my Garment District shorts, "City

Sports" sneaks, and my fish earrings — I'd head out to the climb. I'd walk as fast as possible to get the most benefit from the exercise, to get to the top, as effectively as possible, of course. My mind would start whirling around. How much time do I have after a rattle snake bites? If I see a mountain lion, do I curl up in a ball — or is that if I see a bear? And what are these other creatures like? Do they like the taste of humans? There are these huge seven-foot desert cockroaches, and loud clicking locusts, snakes, black hairy spiders, and horny-toads that look like a cross between a dinosaur and a frog. At one point, I heard a loud rattle and ran, tore away from the sound, yelling, feeling oh, so very butch. I'm not a nature girl yet.

I most definitely know this on long hikes. On one hike, I needed to relieve myself after an hour or so. I tried to walk differently, or faster, desperately trying to hold it. I finally got to the point where I had to find a spot. For the first few miles or so, I hadn't seen a soul, so I felt I could be somewhat safe. So, there I go beside a tree. Next thing I know, I hear a man and his dog on one side, and two women chattering on the other. I cleverly picked a spot that was between two converging paths. Great. In a panic, I ended up peeing all over my sneakers and socks, and dropping my hiking book in the mess, scrambling not to show my ass to the world. Yep, yet another humiliating experience.

I've had lots of these humiliations since I've been here for three months. I've been plodding along getting rejected from jobs, missing my dear friends and community, desperately yearning for the sea, yelping away from snakes, and tripping over my nature. Part of coming here was to shake me out of my comfort zone, and wake me up a bit. I've been shaken. And changed a little.

I'm slowly beginning to unfold another part of myself — in large part due to spending time out with the sky, the earth in its diversity and vastness. Part of coming to terms with my sexuality was recognizing that I have a big mix of feelings and attractions. Part of "waking up" is coming to recognize that I have lots of interests, skills, and yes, fears and weaknesses. And part of coming to terms with my life, is to stop, embrace the earth, and breathe it in.

My hikes lately have changed. I move slower. I try to notice things. I look up, and see the deep turquoise sky. The air feels lighter and fresher somehow. The wind is incredibly



Photo by Steph Miserlis

strong up high in the mountains. It feels powerful and majestic, and can actually knock me off balance. Once, I ended up by a river, surrounded by beautiful tall aspens, with their little coin shaped shimmering leaves that flutter. And the cottonwoods shed these light fluffy puffs of white that freely float in the air, making any moment feel like a childhood fairy tale. Blue, purple, and gold butterflies flutter around. When the sun is setting, the sky is truly magical, full of streaks of gold, deep purple, rich pink, and pastel turquoise.

I doubt I'll ever calmly relax when I see a large black desert cockroach or smile thinking of it as yet another one of the earth's wonderful creatures. I know I will always feel most at home by the sea. And more than likely, I will always try to find a porta-potty before going the natural way. But the rusty browns and reds, the horny toads and lizards, and the cactus and sage are all becoming another part of me, and my mix. And now, I sometimes actually move slowly like the shopping clerk, and feel grace, and fullness, and ready for another hike. ▽

Backyard from page 1

planted and/or maintained pansies, tulips, daffodils, white and purple lillies, black-eyed susans, chrysanthemums, garlic, scallions, tomatoes, hydrangeas, rambling roses, classic roses, peach roses, the blackberry bush that extends against the 20 foot back fence, and two lilac trees. I'm trying to bring up cucumbers and peppers from seed. All of the work I put into my backyard provides exercise for my body, mind and spirit. All the plants are like my babies and I'm responsible for nourishing them. I use coffee grinds and used tea bags for the tomatoes, and plant spikes for the flowering plants.

My late cousin Mike is the one who originally planted the roses. "Mikey's roses," his mother, Aunt Claire, calls them. My aunt believes in the saints and likes to pray to St. Theresa. You know when St. Theresa will answer your prayer with a "yes" when a rose appears. This rose can be given to you. But when roses come up in the backyard, Aunt Claire likes to think that's a "yes" from St. Theresa.

I have a great responsibility to Pookie, Aunt Claire, and myself to take care of my backyard. For Pookie and Blackie, it's a playground and lounge. For my aunt, it's where prayers are answered and her favorite pansies grow. For me, it's exercise and air and meditation. Like I said, I'm very blessed. ▽

Nature from page 1

and I snickering into our beer is: how can nature be described as male or female? How can it be described as heterosexual or homosexual? It encompasses all of these, and more. Nature is omnisexual, pangendered, and will kick your ass. Sounds like my kind of person.

Certainly it's well documented that animals are bisexual. Monkeys, birds, rats, even fruit flies have been shown to practice various sexual behaviors depending on environment, genetics, or mood. And that's just for couples. Then there's the wild, tumultuous gang-bangs of the salt-water mussel, which has the proportionally longest male sex organ of any creature in the animal kingdom. But the slugs really have it made. Each of them has both sets of genitals, and when they mate, they do each other simultaneously. That's pretty cool.

But nature isn't just animals. Most plants have both male and female sexual organs. They can even self-pollinate. Dolly the sheep was no big deal to the plant kingdom. And what about weather? Wilhelm Reich, a student of Freud, linked "Orgone Energy" (synonymous with libido) and meteorological processes, citing sources going back to the seventeenth century. I guess it has something to do with thunderstorms and goosebumps.

Nature goes beyond labels of gender or sexuality. It encompasses all of us, from the bisexual monkeys, to the gay albatrosses, to the plants that certain legally challenged entrepreneurs separate by gender. Nature is getting it on, and in more directions than the kinkiest among us could handle. But if anyone knows its number, could you ask it to give me a call? ▽

*Mother I'd Like to Fuck.

Metaphor Me By Abby Stevens

I was Lady in Waiting.
Now I take my place
with the girls debating
on whether or not
you're a good catch.
Though you are the hook
caught on my fin
please unlatch me
toss me back in.
Upstream or down
upstream or down
Salmon or white fish
I'll be around...

Sibling Survey

A team of lesbian, gay, and bisexual researchers at the University of Vermont are interested in how the lives of gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals are similar to or different from their siblings. They are surveying LGB individuals with one or more siblings (who can be any sexual identity) who would also be willing to fill out a survey. To participate in the study, please reply to the following address: Sisters and Brothers Project, P. O. Box 3009, John Dewey Hall, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405; SiblingStudy@uvm.edu; 802-656-4372. Send the following information: where you heard about the survey, your name and address, number of siblings over eighteen years old that might fill out a survey, and if any of these siblings are also LGB. Do you want all surveys sent to you or directly to siblings? (If so, send their names and addresses.) You and your siblings will receive a questionnaire that focuses on demographic information, health, mental health, and life experiences. This questionnaire does not focus on sexual orientation, so you can participate even if you're not "out" to your siblings. They will send you a lavender questionnaire specifically about being bisexual, lesbian, or gay.

Nude Beach in Danger

The Ledges nude beach in Vermont is possibly in trouble, and a new group has been formed to try and save it. The Ledges is a beautiful beach where Biversity sponsors trips to each summer. Rumor has it that a person owning property near the Ledges has filed a complaint to the Wilmington town board, and is seeking an anti-nudity ordinance. The Ledges is definitely one of the best nude beaches in the NE area, and it'd be a true shame to lose it. Send mail to friendsofledges@hotmail.com to receive more information. See <http://pub54.ezboard.com/fvermontledgesinfoboardfrm2> for more information and background.

Queer Outdoors Organizations

IGLOO (International Gay and Lesbian Outdoors Organizations) is an informal world-wide network of gay, lesbian and bisexual outdoor organizations. Its major goals are to foster communication and interaction between member groups and to help connect individuals with outdoor sports clubs in their region. Any GLB group, whose main focus is outdoor athletic sports of a participatory, non-competitive nature is welcome to join. Check out their website at www.actwin.com/chiltern/igloo.html.

Listed below are some Massachusetts-based queer outdoors organizations that IGLOO listed on their website. The editor can not attest to the currency of the information.

Chiltern Mountain Club

P.O. Box 407
Boston, MA 02117
888-831-3100
chiltern@chiltern.org

National Gay and Lesbian
Rock Climbing and Caving Events
Stonewall Climbers

P.O. Box 445
Boston, MA 02124

Shoreline

P.O. Box 1227
Hyannis, MA 02601

Triangle Divers

P.O. Box 191
Ashland, MA 01721
617-422-1775
ChrisMcNal@aol.com or
tridive@world.std.com

Venture Out

P.O. Box 60271
Florence, MA 01062
413-584-8764
ventureout@geocities.com

Women Outdoors Inc.

55 Talbot Avenue
Medford, MA 02155
CarNoel@aol.com

Cartoon by Dan Taylor



BI-CAMP TIP #86: BEARS CAN SMELL HONEY.

American Stamp Honors Bisexual Latina Artist

By Ellyn Ruthstrom



Sometimes the conservatives let you know about something good going on even before the liberals do, by virtue of the fact that they start complaining about it. Recently, the United States Postal Service issued a new 34-cent stamp to commemorate

the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, and I found out about it from an e-mail of an article from *The Wall Street Journal* which excoriated the USPS for choosing Kahlo. The author, John J. Miller, claims that it is a slap in the face of immigrant Latinas that the first woman to represent them on an American stamp was a radical bisexual communist.

The official word of the USPS was, "The Frida Kahlo stamp allows us to reach out across communities to let everyone know that

this organization has a commitment to diversity that involves both our customers and our employees. Our stamp program is a wonderful reflection of this commitment." When challenged about Kahlo's politics, a postal spokeswoman replied, "We'd like to emphasize her artistic achievements. Besides, back in those days it was fashionable to be a communist."

Fashionable or not, Kahlo was an incredible artist, led an amazing (and painful) life, and in her forty-seven years made a mark in the world that many Latinas and non-Latinas alike are still impressed with. After reading the nasty e-mail, I went right out and bought up a full sheet of the stamps, which is a beautiful self-portrait of the artist.

For a little philatelic trivia, Kahlo is not the first bisexual to be on an American stamp. Eleanor Roosevelt, Billy Holiday, and Emily Dickinson, to name just a few, have been on American commemoratives.

Ask for the Kahlo stamp at your local P.O. and, to borrow the subject head from the e-mail I received (and which, rumor has it originated with Lani Ka'ahumanu): Lick a bisexual Latina communist artist/cult figure today! ▼

New York Center Adds Bi and Trans to Name

On Monday, June 18, the New York Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center took an historic step towards inclusion with the announcement of a new name and logo. At the Center's annual Garden Party, Executive Director Richard Burns and President Richard Winger announced that the Center's new name will be The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center. "What this change symbolizes, is the power of naming," said Executive Director Richard Burns. "It sends a message to the world that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are all part of the same movement, working and fighting together to build a community of inclusion."

The new logo and name took effect when the Center returned to its historic building at 208 W. 13th Street on July 12. For more information and the latest news about the move, check out the Center's website at www.gaycenter.org. (Unfortunately, the website has not caught up with this development and the old logos and exclusive language were still on their webpages at presstime.) ▼

Teenage Angst By Abby Stevens

I climb up the tree
to hide behind the leaves
You won't hear me playing
that old boombox
You'll think it's a bird
with a really good agent
Won't hear a word
of my singing along
If you do
pretend it's karaoke

This fat chick
could take some bricks
and pummel you from
that bough

I can't even keep time
in this silly odd rhyme
What am I good for anyhow?

Women of Color Anthology

There is a call for submissions for nonfiction writing by women of color between the ages of 13 and 30 for an upcoming anthology. Deadline is September 1, 2001. For information, contact: Wendy M. Thompson, P.O. Box 11764, Santa Barbara, CA 93107; womynproject@gurlmail.com.

Latina Lesbian Youth Project

Proyecto Luna is a group for gay and lesbian Latina youth and they are outreaching to Latina lesbian and bisexual young women in the Boston area. They have meetings twice a month and activities. Peer leaders are needed for a new part of the program that will educate Latina lesbian and bisexual youth on various health-related topics in a comfortable, fully bilingual environment. Located at 95 Berkeley Street, 6th floor, their e-mail is luna@lhi.org and phone is 617-0350-6900 ext. 150.

Autumn Gender-Free Dance Camp

September 14-16, 2001 will be the annual Gender-Free Dance Camp at the Becket/Chimney Corners YMCA Camp. Sponsored by the Lavender Country and Folk Dancers, the weekend of dancing and music is open to all dancers. Partners are not necessary, nor is previous experience. If you register by August 16, the regular registration fee is \$175, with work exchange it is \$95. All housing and food is included in the registration fee. For more information, contact Bob Peterson at 978-597-5861, CampReg@ContraCorner.com or www.ContraCorner.com/lcfd/camp/.

Rhode Island Adopts Transgender-Inclusive Non-Discrimination Law

On July 17, 2001 Rhode Island became the second state in the nation — following Minnesota in 1993 — to adopt a non-discrimination law that clearly prohibits discrimination against transgender people in employment, housing, credit and public accommodations. The law amends all of the state's non-discrimination laws to ensure that transgender people who face discrimination may seek redress in the form of injunctive relief and damages.

Kate Monteiro, the president of the Rhode Island Alliance for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights, the statewide political organization which was a driving force behind the law's passage, said, "The passage of this long overdue law is a crucial step in the struggle to make clear that discrimination based on gender difference and stereotypes is wrong. We're proud of the Rhode Island legislature's continuing commitment to assure all Rhode Islanders are afforded basic human rights and treated with dignity and respect."

The statute adds the phrase "gender identity or expression" to Rhode Island's non-discrimination laws. It defines "gender identity or expression" as including "a person's actual or perceived gender, as well as a person's gender identity, gender-related self image, gender-related appearance, or gender-related expression; whether or not that gender identity, gender-related self image, gender-related appearance, or gender-related expression is different from that traditionally associated with the person's sex at birth."

The law protects a wide range of people, broadly referred to as transgender, who face discrimination in many different contexts. The law will protect, among others, individuals who are transsexual and those who cross-dress, as well as anyone who does not fit widely-held stereotypes of what it means to look like a man or a woman. For example, it will ensure that employers do not take adverse action against an employee simply for being transgender. Similarly, it will ensure that an otherwise exemplary employee is not disciplined or terminated if the employer learns that the employee intends to undergo sex-reassignment surgery. So too will it protect the housing applicant who gets denied an apartment because the landlord prefers not to rent to a man who appears feminine or a woman who appears masculine.

"This is a tremendously important law that will ensure the protection of transgender people's basic rights. Far too often, we have seen courts exclude transgender people from protections under existing laws for unprincipled reasons. No more will this be the case in Rhode Island," remarked Jennifer Levi, staff attorney at Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD), who was instrumental in helping to draft the language of the bill.

Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders is New England's leading legal rights organization dedicated to ending discrimination based on sexual orientation, HIV status, and gender identity and expression.

The Rhode Island Alliance for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights, founded in 1983, advocates for civil rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Rhode Islanders through political, legal, and educational activities devoted to increasing awareness and respect for the human rights of all Rhode Islanders. ▼

From a press release from GLAD and the Rhode Island Alliance for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights.



Photo by Ellen McCullough

A fabulous youthful contingent carried the BRC banner in the Boston Pride March.



Book Review: *The Journal of Bisexuality*, edited by Fritz Klein, M.D., The Harrington Press, 2001.

Reviewed by Ellyn Ruthstrom

We have our own journal, dear readers. *The Journal of Bisexuality* is now being published by The Harrington Press. Edited by Fritz Klein, M.D., author of *The Bisexual Option* and other bi titles, the journal includes articles about bi history, personal essays, research, bi theory, and reviews.

In this first issue, local activist Robyn Ochs is profiled by Heidi Randen for her work in the community and especially for her editing of the *Bisexual Resource Guide*. If you don't know Robyn or about how the Boston bi community got organized, this article will give you a quick synopsis of the development.

Another local writer, Pete Chavy, has a short provocative piece discussing bisexuality and being "on the margins" which is worth a quick read. And in another interesting piece, three members of a triad each tell their version of how they met and became a family.

Researcher Paul Rust has an article, "the Meanings of Bisexual Identities" which analyzes data from the first large-scale study to focus on bisexuality and involve an international sample. Rust has some very interesting observations about people's choice of identity. Given the opportunity to choose from a large group of self-identities, most respondents (60%) chose more than one (the average being 2.6 identities), and 15% choosing not to label themselves (how bi!). Rust also deals with how individuals define their own bisexuality — whether they've been sexual with more than one sex, or emotionally tied to more than one sex, or other ways they determine it. It's a fascinating read.

San Francisco figures as a site for bi visibility in a number of pieces. In one, a group of San Francisco bi activists have a conversation about the development of the bi community in the seventies and eighties, and Carol Queen and Robert Morgan Lawrence detail how bisexuals were key in the development of safer sex standards in the city during the eighties. And a third article discusses the start of the Fencesitter's Ball and Bi Film Festival in San Francisco in the nineties. These are important history pieces, though aren't always as exciting to read as others.

The article I found the most interesting was "Bisexual Issues in Sex Therapy: A

Bisexual Surrogate Partner Relates Her Experiences from the Field." This is not something I know much about, so I really enjoyed getting insight into what a professional surrogate partner's work includes. Linda Poelzl shares her experiences by describing sexual therapeutic cases involving men and women clients who were experiencing various sexual orientation issues and the treatment strategies she then used. She highlights how her own bisexuality has been a great resource to her in helping a variety of clients.

This journal has started off with a strong first issue and we can hope that Harrington Park Press can make this last. Check out www.haworthpressinc.com for more info.



BBWN co-founder, Robyn Ochs, speaking at the 2001 Boston Dyke March at the Commons.

Pride from page 3

getic and youthful. Unfortunately, the BBWN banner that Tina Blanco made for us has gone missing so we did not have visibility for our group. Let's make sure we get one made for next year with our new logo. (See sidebar at right for new logo contest.)

For the second year in a row, the BRC snagged a prime spot on the Commons — right at the entrance to the Pride Festival. And due to the incredible job of the set-up crew, led by Sheeri Kritzer, the banners and displays drew hundreds of interested folks to the table. Again, many trusty volunteers helped staff the table, sell the merchandise, and answer questions for attendees.

Every year Pride comes around and surprises us, but each year great people come out and put their energy together and the community shines! ▼

BBWN Logo Contest

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network needs a logo and is sponsoring a contest to find it. Are you creative? Can you design something that is eye-catching? The logo will be used in *BiWomen*, and other BBWN publications, and maybe even a t-shirt or buttons! And once we have the new logo we can make a new banner to carry in Pride next year! All submissions to the contest must be turned in by December 1, 2001. They can be sent to BBWN, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140, or forwarded on e-mail to nellythrustmor@aol.com. Get out those crayons (only kidding) and start creating!

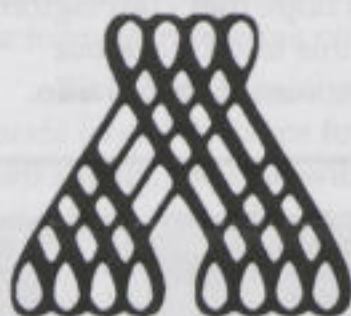
Swim for Life

Saturday, September 8 is the Fourteenth Annual Swim for Life and Paddler Flotilla AIDS Benefit in Provincetown. This is a 1.4 mile open water swim and all proceeds benefit various Provincetown and Cape Cod AIDS organizations. For the second year, there will be kayaks, canoes, and row boats forming a Paddler Flotilla alongside the swimmers. Contact information: call 508-487-3684, e-mail at rerooot@tiac.net, or check out www.swim4life.org.

The Allies Project to Launch National Outreach

By Jonathan Zucker

Founded in the fall of 2000, The Allies Project seeks to actively engage straight America in the struggle for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) rights. For too long, too many GLBT rights advocates have waited for straight America come to them, rather than reaching out to the straight community. This lack of outreach contributes to a status quo of ignorance,




which in turn perpetuates straight America's apathy about or opposition to GLBT rights. With the exception of a circle of intimates represented by PFLAG (Parents,

Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), SSN (Straight Spouses Network) and COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere), most straight people have not had real opportunities to engage in active support of GLBT equality. Most of us have not seen discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity as "our" issue; most of us do

not see the prices we pay for the privileges of being straight in our homophobic culture. Through an aggressive program of outreach and education, The Allies Project will counter that belief and provide straight allies with a point of entry into the movement — a safe place from which to begin active involvement in the struggle for GLBT equality.

The Allies Project is supported by an Advisory Board co-chaired by Donna Red Wing (OutGiving director of the Gill Foundation) and Jimmy Creech (chair of the board of Soulforce, Inc.). Joining Donna and Jimmy are, among others, Dr. Amity Buxton (director of the SSN), Robyn Ochs (editor of the *Bisexual Resource Guide*), Felicia Park-Rogers (director of COLAGE), the Rev. Elder Troy Perry (founder and moderator of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches), and Tony Varona (legal director and chief counsel for Human Rights Campaign).

The Allies Project will launch its first major outreach effort, "Coming Out As Allies" initiative this fall. For more information about The Allies Project, or to get involved with outreach and education, contact the project at field@alliesproject.org or 202-234-0916. 

Out on the Edge Theater Festival Schedule

The Theater Offensive launches its tenth annual Out On The Edge Festival of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Theater, a four-week extravaganza beginning September 5th at the Boston Center for the Arts. All performances take place at the BCA Theater, 539 Tremont St. All tickets are \$22 each, \$17 for Repeat Offenders. Every Wednesday and Sunday are Pay What You Can Nights. Free workshops will be held weekly. For more information about group rates and workshops, please call 617-542-4214 or visit www.thetheateroffensive.org.

Sept. 5 & 6 at 8:00pm, Sept. 7 & 8 at 9:00pm
Dr. Frockrocket's Vivifying (Re-Animatronic) Menagerie and Medicine Show.

Sept. 7, 8 & 9 at 7:00pm
I Remember Mapa

Sept. 12 & 13 at 8:00pm, Sept. 14 & 15 at 9:00pm
Shequida's Opera for Dummies

Sept. 14, 15 & 16 at 7:00pm
Crouching Cabico, Hidden Cho

Sept. 19 & 20 at 8:00pm, Sept. 21 & 22 at 9:00pm
P.S. 69

Sept. 21, 22 & 23 at 7:00pm
A Fairy Tale

Sept. 28 & 29 at 7:00pm
Holy Shit! Stories from Heaven and Hell

Sept. 27 at 8 pm, Sept. 28 & 29 at 9:00pm
Higher Highs, Lower Lows



CALENDAR *continued from page 12*

Asian food in a unique atmosphere at Buddha's Delight II, 404 Harvard Street, Brookline. Nearest T stop is Coolidge Corner on the C branch of the Green Line.

September 4 ♦ Tuesday

Bi Rap at the Women's Center. See August 7th.

September 5 ♦ Wednesday

Coming Out as Bisexual. See August 1st.

September 9 ♦ Sunday

BBWN Potluck Brunch at Ellyn's in Somerville, noon. We'll schmooze and eat first, then we'll take part in the Second Annual Book Swap. Bring books you'd like to give away and take something good home with you. Then, if the weather is good, we can take off for a walk in the Fells or other local spot. Call 617-623-5535 or nellythrustmor@aol.com for info.

September 11 ♦ Tuesday

BBWN Volunteer Serving at the Boston Living Center Ladies' Night, 5:30 p.m. Call Ellyn to volunteer, 617-623-5535. See August 7th.

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. See August 14th.

Queer Poly Women's Discussion Group, 7-8:45 p.m. at Fenway, 7 Haviland Street, Boston. See August 22nd.

September 12 ♦ Wednesday

Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m. See August 8th.

September 14 ♦ Friday

BiWomen Submissions Deadline. This issue's theme is "Polyamory." See page 2 for more ideas. Send submissions to: *BiWomen*, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA, 02140 or e-mail nellythrustmor@aol.com.

September 15 ♦ Saturday

Biversity Brunch, 11:30 a.m. Brunch will be at Doyle's at 3484 Washington Street in Jamaica Plain, between the Green Street and Forest Hills stops on the Orange Line. Planning meeting for future events will be right after the brunch.

Field trip to King Richard's Faire, hosted by the New England Leather Alliance (NELA). Tickets are subsidized by NELA and are only \$10 (regularly \$20). If you are interested, RSVP to Kimberly@nela-newengland.org.

September 18 ♦ Tuesday

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Call for topic, 617-354-8807. See August 7th.

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. See August 1st.

September 22 ♦ Saturday

New Hampshire Women's Music Festival in Danbury, New Hampshire. A celebration of the many talented women musicians in the state. Contact 603-225-3501, or visit www.nh.ultranet.com.

September 23 ♦ Sunday

International Celebrate Bisexuality Day!!! Last year's event at the Harriet Tubman House was loads of fun. We're planning another great event for this year's celebration, but the details aren't all in place. For more information, call Marshall at 617-927-6032, e-mail mmiller@fenwayhealth.org or look for updates on the BRC webpage, www.biresource.org.

September 27 ♦ Thursday

NEW DATE FOR THE MAILING

BiWomen mailing, 7-9 p.m. at the Bi Office at 29 Stanhope St. We will be trying to do the mailing on the night of the BRC Volunteer Night in the hope there will be plenty of folks there to pitch in and make it easy to get done and more fun! Join us on the fourth floor of the Living Center. Socialize during and after when we'll drop by Women's Night at Club Cafe for a little unwinding afterwards.

September 29 ♦ Saturday

Dyke Night at the Midway, 10 p.m. - 2 a.m. 3496 Washington St, Jamaica Plain. Featuring performance by Sister Funk, a five piece all female band, plays phat, funky, R-n-B, original dance music. Accessible to Green Street and Forest Hills stops on the Orange Line (about a five and a ten-minute walk, respectively). Green Street is closer, but Forest Hills usually has cabs waiting. Contact Kelley at 781-321-6188.

September 30 ♦ Sunday

Biversity Brunch, 1 p.m. Choose from a variety of Asian food at Ma Soba. Corner of Dunster and Mt. Auburn Street in Harvard Square, Cambridge. Nearest T stop is Harvard on the Red Line.

Biversity Boston is the mixed gender bisexual Network of Greater Boston.

Ongoing Events

4th Sundays: Bi People of Color Potluck. NOTE: The PoC Potluck is on hiatus for the summer.

Wednesdays:

Gendertalk. 8:30-9:30 p.m. on WMBR 88.1 FM. Deals with transgender and queer issues.

Women's Club Nights

Every Thursday and last Saturday of the month: Dyke Night at the Midway Cafe, 3496 Washington Street in Jamaica Plain.

**BiWomen
wants you!!!**



SUBSCRIPTION RATE

for *BiWomen*
(sliding scale)

___ \$0-\$20 (pay what you can)

___ \$20-\$30 (suggested)

___ \$30-\$100 Extra Special Donor

___ Renewal

___ New Subscriber

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE (Optional) _____

BBWN, P.O. BOX 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140

The "Bi Office"

is the Bisexual Resource Center, located at 29 Stanhope Street, behind Club Cafe, right next door to Bertucci's and just down the street from the Hard Rock Cafe. For info call 617-424-9595.

Ongoing Events

1st & 3rd

Tuesdays:

Bi Women's Rap. 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. For info and discussion topics call 617-354-8807.

2nd Tuesdays:

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. Info: 617-354-8807.

1st & 3rd

Thursdays:

Bi Women's Resource & Support Group. 7 p.m. at the Women's Health Consortium, 29 Vaughan Mall, Portsmouth, NH. For info call 603-431-1669 or contact Sue Corcoran at schmoo@nh.ultranet.com.

Thursdays:

Queer Jewish Women Under 30, 7-8 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. Call 617-354-8807 or beee333@hotmail.com

CALENDAR

August 1 ♦ Wednesday

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. An informal support group for people who think they may be bisexual or attracted to more than one sex. A small donation is requested to help pay for the space. The group meets at the Bisexual Resource Center at 29 Stanhope St. in Boston. Call 617-424-9595 for info.

August 7 ♦ Tuesday

BBWN Volunteer Serving at the Boston Living Center Ladies' Night, 5:30 p.m. Help serve the women clients at the Living Center's Ladies Night Dinner in the second floor cafeteria. Your own meal is provided for you, too. 29 Stanhope St., Boston. Nearest T is the Back Bay Orange Line Station. Call Ellyn to volunteer, 617-623-5535.

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. A discussion group for bisexual, bi-friendly, and questioning women. Topic: "Do Femme/Butch Identities Exist in Bi Communities?" Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., 617-354-8807.

August 8 ♦ Wednesday

Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m. All bi community members welcome to attend. The meeting is on the fourth floor of the Boston Living Center, 29 Stanhope St. in Back Bay.

GLBT and Allies Community Meeting, 7:00 p.m. Fenway Community Health Center, 7 Haviland Street, Room 201A, Boston. A statewide campaign for

same-sex marriage is underway. Attend the community meeting and help build the movement for same-sex marriage in Massachusetts. For more info, call 617-249-0297 or e-mail ssmcampaign@aol.com.

August 14 ♦ Tuesday

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. Meets on the second Tuesday of each month. Call 617-354-8807 for directions.

August 16 - 20 ♦ Thursday - Monday

Bi Camp 2001. The location is near Northampton, Massachusetts. You really should be registered by August 1st, but hurry to the website and see if you can still get in on it. See www.biresource.org/biversity/bicamp_form.txt

August 21 ♦ Tuesday

Coming Out as Bisexual. 7-9 p.m. See August 1st.

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Topic: "Bi Rap Meets at the Diesel Cafe." We'll be out for an evening of socializing, scoping the scene, and maybe a game or two or two at the Diesel Cafe. Meet at 257 Elm Street in Davis Square. Nearest T is Davis Square on the Red Line.



August 22 ♦ Wednesday

Queer Poly Women's Discussion Group, 7-8:45 p.m. at Fenway Community Health, 7 Haviland Street, Boston. The Queer Poly Women's Group is a space for folks to talk about whatever issues are relevant in their lives, both positive and negative. The group sometimes has a set topic, but they frequently don't. Open to all self-identified women. The nearest T is Hynes on the Green Line.

August 24 ♦ Friday

Essence of a Woman, 6-8 p.m. Come to Fenway Community Health for the second part of "The Single Woman's Guide to Dating and Techniques." 7 Haviland Street, Boston. Nearest T is Hynes on the Green Line.

18th Annual Twin Oaks Women's Gathering, August 24-26 in Louisa, Virginia. "Celebrating Ourselves in Community," featuring dance, movement, drumming, camping, swimming, workshops, etc. Contact: 540-894-5141; gathering@twinoaks.org; www.twinoaks.org/comt/women.

August 26 ♦ Sunday

Biversity Brunch, 1 p.m. Enjoy great vegetarian

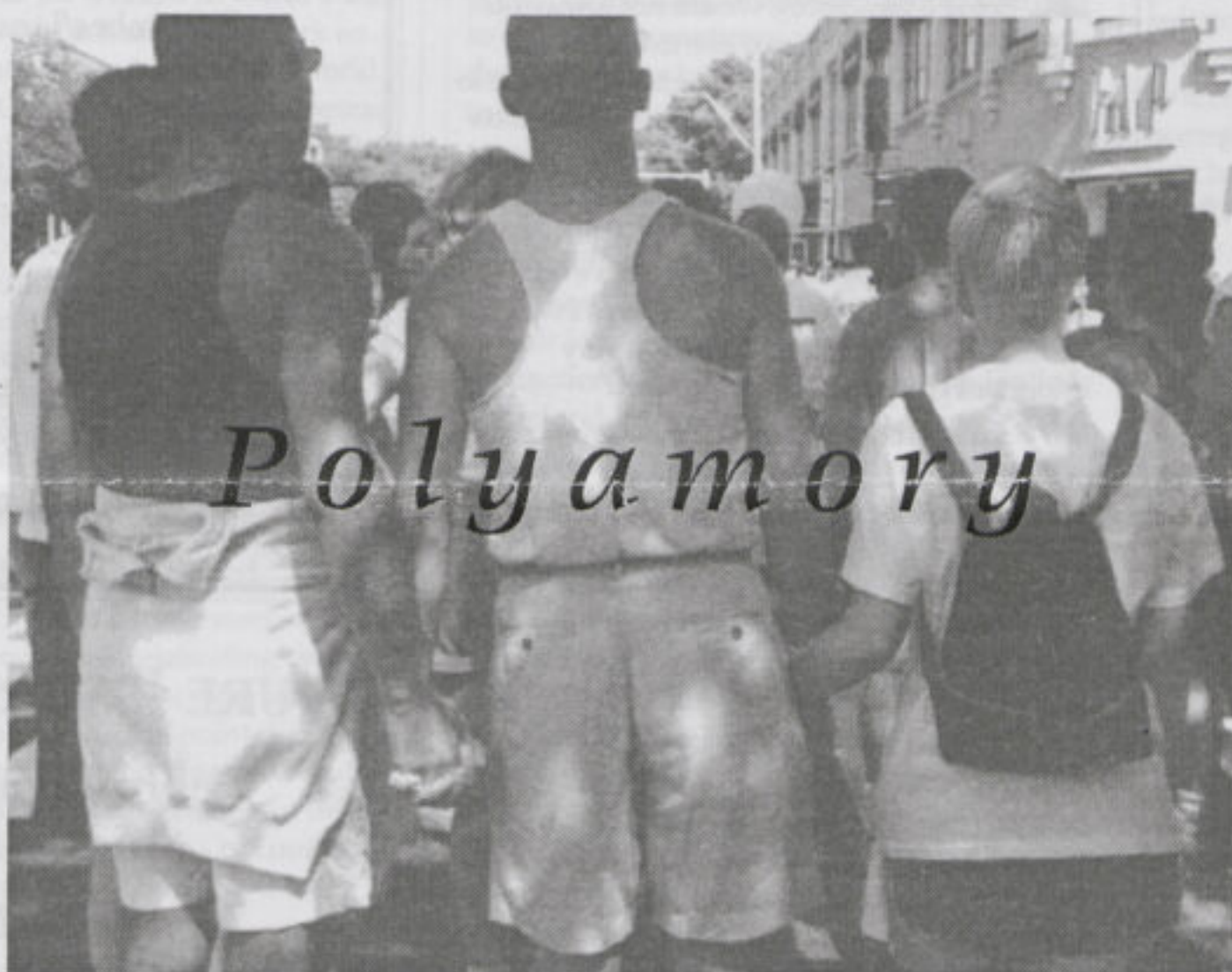
Show your VISIBILITY with buttons!!



- ♦ I'm bisexual and I'm NOT attracted to you.
- ♦ Racism, Sexism, Homophobia - Recognize the Connections.
- ♦ Bisexual Pride
- ♦ VISIBILITY

\$2.00 per button (includes postage) to: BBWN, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140.

CALENDAR continues on page 11



Musings on My Poly Lives

By Debbie Block-Schwenk

August, 2001

I'm sitting by the Charles River and thinking that bisexuality and polyamory go together. C'mon, work with me here. I don't mean one has to be poly if one is bi, or that all poly folk ought to be bi, or any other stereotypes. What bisexuality and polyamory share at their core is a lack of rules: there is no right or wrong way to be bi, and no right or wrong way to be poly.

OK, I should add a caveat here—my definition of polyamory includes being honest about the nature of one's relationships. There are other forms of nonmonogamy, some equally honest, some less so. But to be polyamorous—as opposed to being non-monogamous, or cheating, or just refusing to form relationships with one's sexual partners—carries with it certain assumptions of intention and communication. But outside of those few guidelines, when it comes to actual relationships, there is no right or wrong way to put them together.

Musings continues on page 4

I Am Still Polyamorous

By Dan Taylor

I still identify as polyamorous. The first time I heard someone use the word polyamorous was at a Pagan/Wiccan convention. One of the convention organizers described herself at the closing meeting as a "Gardnerian, Wiccan, polyamorous, bisexual." We had spent most of the day chatting and flirting, although I had no idea who she was: the wife of a writer I really admired, an influential woman in her own right, one of the event's organizers, and the mother of the little boy I had been watching at play. She was a good many things I aspired to be. I think that probably influenced my own feelings on my identity. I was 18 years old.

In college, I tried several times to have open relationships, usually with disastrous results. My jealousy, and that of my lovers, always got in the way. There would inevitably be an emotional and embarrassing

Still continues on page 5

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

To My Bi Community...	3
Starting Over.....	5
Thinking Outside the Monogamy Box.....	6
Poly Resources.....	6
Poetry.....	6
Top 10.....	7
What I Did on My Summer Vacation...	8
Cartoon.....	10
Calendar.....	11-12

Volunteers of the Month

Gail
Robyn Ochs
[REDACTED]
Denise
Maura
Linda Blair
Kelley
Peggy
Jane
Becky
Kira
Rosalie
Dan Taylor

And many more
fabulous people!
You know who
you are!

BiWomen is published bi-monthly.

Editor:

Ellyn Ruthstrom

Proofreader:

[REDACTED]

Printed on
recycled paper

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay people within the larger society.

Editor's Notes

I've been working on this newsletter during the weekend following the New York, DC, and Pennsylvania tragedies. Being a bimonthly, we are not always as current with news as we'd like to be, but the extreme situation quickly brought two people to their pens to share their thoughts and reactions and I thank Robyn and Rosalie for doing so. It may seem incongruous to have such sharings in an issue centering on Polyamory, but as Rosalie points out, tragedy can instill in us an even stronger drive to live true to ourselves every day of our life. And living true lives is a very important component of polyamory.

I tried to get a variety of experiences of polyamory to be represented here, and I really love the pieces that people did contribute, thank you all for sharing. But I know that there are many more poly lives that are not represented here and I regret that. I hope that other readers may decide to contribute other views for future issues.

I am so grateful to the wonderful writers who send things into the newsletter, but it would be wonderful if others would like to do other things for BBWN. Would you be willing to sell some advertising for the newsletter? Would you like to host a brunch? Would you like to organize an evening social? BBWN works the best when there are many people contributing their energy to the collective vision. I hope that if you are reading this and you are in the Boston area that you will be able to put some of your bi energy towards BBWN. Call or email me and we'll talk. 617-623-5535, nellythrustmor@aol.com

On September 23rd we'll be festivizing at our Third Annual Celebrate Bisexuality Day event. This year is a Dance Party. When the world feels unsafe and shaken to its core, making connections to a community are very important. I'm really looking forward to seeing the familiar faces, and meeting some new people at this event because the bi community is an amazingly diverse and open-hearted place to express yourself. We'll have photos and a report in the next issue.

Ellyn Ruthstrom

NEXT IN BiWOMEN

The *BiWomen* theme for
December/January is:

Being Bi in the Boonies

Are you out in the country with no bi community to support you? Or are you out in the country and you've found the most amazing group of people to share community with? Tell us your stories of being bi in the boonies from whatever perspective you have.

Deadline: November 10, 2001

FUTURE ISSUES IN 2001

February/March
Spirituality

April/May
The Arts

PLEASE SUBMIT TO BiWOMEN !

Send articles, calendar entries, letters,
artwork, photos,
news, and views to:

BiWomen

P.O. Box 400639

Cambridge, MA 02140

or via e-mail to

NellyThrustmor@aol.com

***If you do not want your name
published, please tell us.***

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this newsletter are copyrighted
by the authors and artists.

To my bi community,

I was raised in New York City, and people I love have been directly affected by this (my stepsister Jill worked in tower 1 but stopped to vote on her way to work so was coming up out of the subway at the World Trade Center (WTC) when the plane hit, instead of in her office on the 81st floor. My brother David is a NYC firefighter who is right now physically ok and emotionally not. I could go on, but won't).

It is hard not to feel terror, it is hard to speak up publicly against an "immediate and decisive" response. But we have to be so very careful. Retribution should be directed at those who were responsible for this action, not at ethnic groups, and not at entire nations or populations. When that happens, innocent people are killed. As the expression goes, "an eye for an eye makes everyone blind."

I know that a lot of people were appalled at the sight of Palestinians celebrating on the street. A retired firefighter who was interviewed on the news made the point that when the US dropped the bomb on Nagasaki and Hiroshima, Americans were dancing in the streets. That doesn't make it ok - of course it is wrong. But we have done the same thing ourselves.

And we do need to think about why most people in the world hate the U.S. government.

Just because this happened does not mean that we should be any less critical of U.S. foreign policy, of the current administration's refusal to respect international protocols, or the fact that we have a horrible record of intervention in the affairs of other countries, that we are a small percentage of the world's population yet consume far more than our fair share of the world's resources, or of the fact that we have bombed hospitals and civilians in other countries. As I am urging us to do, I hope that people in other countries can make the distinction between the people of the United States and its government.

Honestly, I don't have an answer right now. I just hope that we can keep THINKING, and not engage in knee-jerk responses. If you want to do something—get involved in disaster relief, give blood (if you are allowed to), do anti-racism work—many innocent people are being targeted right now because of the color of their skin and their (presumed) nationality and/or religion. We need to raise our voices right now.

With love to all of you,
and in peace,
Robyn Ochs

BBWN Logo Contest

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network needs a logo and is sponsoring a contest to find it. Are you creative? Can you design something that is eye-catching? The logo will be used in *BiWomen*, and other BBWN publications, and maybe even a t-shirt or buttons! And once we have the new logo we can make a new banner to carry in Pride next year! All submissions to the contest must be turned in by December 1, 2001. They can be sent to BBWN, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140, or forwarded on e-mail to nellythrustmor@aol.com. Get out those crayons (only kidding) and start creating!

Starting Over

I am so thankful that I was at the World Trade Center (WTC) Tuesday...15 minutes early. Usually punctual to a fault, never early, that day I needed to get to school before classes began to turn in an assignment. I do feel deep down inside that even if I had been there during the attacks, I would have gotten out alive. However, at 8:20 a.m. Tuesday, September 11, I was walking through the underground shopping mall of the WTC from the PATH train to the N subway train, as I do every weekday morning, and I thought for the first time in months, "I walk through here every day and this place was bombed several years ago." Whether you call that a premonition or just a heightened sense of reality, it really doesn't matter.

I am just glad to be able to write about it today. I won't go into the details of the rest of that day—you've heard the stories of the people I met trying to leave the city, you've seen the footage of the burning (later crumbling) buildings I saw in person from West 4th Street. But I will tell you about how this has affected

By [REDACTED]

me as a bisexual woman in a same-sex relationship.

I rather unwillingly, but of my own free will, left my wonderful women's community of Boston to go back to graduate school two years ago. Since then, I have been living in a

Starting continues on page 10



[REDACTED] and her partner, Melissa, had a civil union ceremony in Vermont in June, followed by a temple wedding with friends and family in New Hampshire. BBWN and the Boston bi community wish the couple all the best in the years to come. Mazel tov!

Queeruption

Queers from around the world will be converging on the San Francisco Bay area over the long weekend of October 4-8, 2001 for Queeruption. Together they will collaborate, learn, and participate in a variety of open forums, performances, exhibits, screenings, and actions. This conference will emphasize people's creation of independent culture and will question gay assimilation and commercialism. It will be an opportunity for people from a variety of places and backgrounds to share the ways in which they are doing political action, sex, technology, music, media, spoken work, food, and more. Check out Queeruption's website for information about the conference, events leading up to it, as well as downloadable fliers to help spread the word. Contact www.queeruption.org; queeruption2001@yahoo.com; 510-698-2039 x3181; P.O. Box 412, Berkeley, CA 94701.

Graphic by Dan Taylor

Musings from page 1

A person can be bisexual whether they are celibate, or date one gender while having fantasies about the other, or have partners of both genders at different times (or at the same time), or anywhere in between. Likewise, polyamory can range from the people who have many relationships at once, to those in a closed trio, to those who may never date more than one person at a time but still hold the philosophical belief that loving more than one person is possible. How I'm poly—and to a certain extent why I'm poly—has changed over the course of my life so far, and continues to change. Hence, my poly lives.

Of course, I've had bisexual lives, too. First the years when I wasn't conscious of it, then the unrequited crushes, then the more mature realization that I was attracted to men and women. The taking on of a bisexual identity as both a personal and political statement was important to me long before I actually slept with a woman.

Being in a committed relationship with a man for the later stages of this journey brought the issue of non-monogamy into immediacy. We discussed it, set some ground rules, and began the uncharted but exhilarating prospect of living an open marriage. It is a decision I've never regretted.

But it's not all action. In fact, of the approximately eight years since my husband and I decided to have an open relationship, I've spent less than a year actually dating another person. He's spent a little over a year. And those times overlap quite a bit—a couple of months in a triad, a few months when we were each dating different women. And those were completely different experiences.

Dating someone my partner was also dating, trying to keep our communication lines

unmuddled at the same time we tried to learn—separately and together—to communicate, to relate to another person, was a huge challenge. All three of us went into the relationship with different expectations and when they didn't mesh, my spouse began withdrawing instead of allowing all of us to reexamine the relationship along different lines. Thinking it was going to build according to a plan, rather than letting the relationship build itself, ended it fairly quickly.

When my spouse and I were each dating others more recently, we yet again fell into the traps of unclear and perhaps incompatible expectations. My girlfriend wanted a level of time and attention from me that I couldn't provide—was this a question of her needs being greater than I thought, or did she fall into old habits of how a relationship "should be" rather than considering this new relationship a unique experience? Probably it was some of each. My husband's girlfriend wanted someone to be her "one and only." For her, that was the only right way to have a committed relationship, and he couldn't do that for her.

Another of my poly lives is when my husband's dating someone and I'm not. Friends sometimes ask me, "How do you know he won't leave you for that other woman?" They seem to forget that plenty of "monogamous" people have left their partners for that other lover. We have a level of trust and honesty that is so complete that I don't feel threatened, and he doesn't have to be forced into a choice between two people he loves. But beyond that, there's something about seeing the man I love in love with someone else that's heartwarming and very sweet. I get to hear about her, about his admiration, hopes, fears, joys and (unfortunately so far), heartbreaks when the relationship ends. I share these things with him and appreciate anew his beauty, his passion for love



and for romance. When we were first dating I was too aflutter with my own feelings to have a true perception of his. Now I get to see again that he is a wonderful human being. And he sees that I am still the loving, openhearted, unconventional woman he fell in love with. Our poly life makes us appreciate each other more, not less.

Finally, there is the poly life when we are not actively non-monogamous at all. Most of our time together falls into this category, but while we may look monogamous to the outside world, polyamory as a value colors our perceptions and our very definition of marriage. Defining our relationship not as one of ownership but as one of partnership, not as dictated by outdated societal "norms" but as built on the rules we decide for ourselves—this is a simple but radical thing. And we enjoy the freedom to discuss our desires for other people without guilt or hesitation, even if they are desires we'll never act upon.

Recognizing that each individual has different emotional and romantic needs—some may be happiest with one partner, some more than one, some with none—is part of an evolution our society must undergo, similar to the way same-sex relationships are slowly becoming more widely recognized on a variety of societal and legal fronts. Whatever stage in my poly life I'm in, I still contribute to that evolution.

Polyamory and bisexuality. Both fluid, complicated ways of living. Both challenging, but in many cases richly rewarding. Both demanding the participants be present in their lives, because there are no set rules to follow. Have a great journey. ▾

Still from page 1

scene, and a lot of hurt feelings. We would drift apart. I have not yet made peace with all of the people I hurt. During the first year after my graduation, I became involved in my only (to date) polyfidelitous relationship, a closed triad. We lasted eighteen months, which for that group was about fifteen months too long.

The other woman identified as straight, although we eventually fell in love. The man found that even two women were not enough for him, and endangered us and others with his unsafe practices. My female partner and I are still close friends, but I still harbor deep resentment and anger towards him.

I have not sought to enter another multi-partner arrangement since.

I am currently in a monogamous relationship with a male, and not looking to change that. It was at my request that our relationship is as closed as it currently is. At several times during our relationship, my partner has asked if I would like to take a female lover, either by myself, or with his involvement. I have declined. However, despite my calamitous history, my identity as polyamorous is nearly as important to me as my identity as bisexual. I can, and do, love more than one person at a time. That, in my opinion, is the essence of polyamory. It is not unthinkable to me that I might never have another partner. But even if the rest of my life is spent with the same man I woke up with this morning, I am still a bisexual. And I am still polyamorous. ▾

Transcending Boundaries

New Haven, Connecticut is the site for Transcending Boundaries: Celebrating the Spectrum of Sexuality, Gender and Sex, a conference for bi, trans, and intersexed communities October 19-21, 2001. The focus of the conference will be to provide visibility to the trans, bi, and intersexed communities, to increase the connections and understanding between our communities, and to provide support and safe space for each other. Keynote speakers will include Evelyn Mantilla, the first openly bisexual Connecticut State Representative; Emi Koyama, intersex activist and educator; and Jamison Greene, transgender activist, writer, and columnist for PlanetOut.com. Registration is \$45, or \$35 for students/low-income. Volunteers are still being sought and can get registration deductions. For all conference and registration information go to www.transcendingboundaries.org or call 860-798-0705.

Polyamory: Peggy

My partner, J (a woman) and I have had a difficult relationship almost from the beginning. We had seen three couples counselors in the first couple of years we were together. The first one we saw terminated after three sessions. The second became ill and went on a several-months long hiatus. I believe we saw her a couple of times after she came back. We continued to have difficulties with our relationship, especially around sex and intimacy issues.

Several years ago, we purchased a vacation home on the cape, and J met and became attracted to a (male) neighbor. For some strange reason, I encouraged her to see him, as I felt she had something important to learn from the relationship. I feel that this was true, even though I'm not sure I'm totally happy with the consequences to me. She continues to see him; in fact, he's become part of our family. I've been intimate with a couple of women during this period, but no one that has lasted for any great length of time.

While my friends, family and children all know and accept J's boyfriend, I'm less than completely comfortable with the "poly" piece of the relationship. I'm out about my sexuality and about having a woman partner and I'm comfortable talking about J's boyfriend with my gay co-workers but not with my straight work group who are people I've known and worked with for years. But, hey, I'm working on it! ▾

Bi Adolescents

There is a support group now forming in Salem, Massachusetts for GLB adolescents to meet in a safe, non-judgmental environment. The group is sponsored by CAB Health & Recovery Services and is held at their offices at 27 Congress Street in Salem. Call 978-740-1586 or 978-740-1583 for more information.

Bi Youth Website

Check out www.biyouth.org for many different resources for bi and questioning youth. The site is still fairly new and will be growing as more youth send in their own contributions, but there are already some really wonderfully touching pieces on the site.

Thinking Outside The Monogamy Box


By Linda Blair

Once upon a time polyamory changed my life. Nine years ago, I was desperately in need of acting on my long held and deep desire to fall in love with a woman. For many years I'd had no way of reconciling these needs with my long term commitment to a wonderful and loving man. Then I realized, thanks to many brave bisexuals who contributed to and edited the pioneering book *Bi Any Other Name*, that I need not necessarily lose the later in order to find the former.

After a long night of crying together and holding each other, my boyfriend agreed to try this approach. I was very scared I could lose him, but even more excited about what the future might hold. Having already dipped my big toe into the Boston bi community by attending a few events, I was now ready to begin looking in earnest for a woman who could make so many of my dreams come true.

I decided to start by volunteering to lead a discussion about polyamory for the bisexual women's discussion group I'd been attending. But first, I thought, I'd better do some "research." The second woman I asked to "interview" about how polyamory worked in

her life was more than willing to help me with it. I couldn't believe my luck! We hit it off right away!

My life has changed a lot since then, but I will always be grateful to those who, by sharing about themselves in a book often called the "bisexual bible," helped me realize that I, too, could think outside the monogamy box. 

POLYAMORY WEB RESOURCES:

Polyamory.com: Resources for Polys and Those Who Love Them

Polyamory.org: Lots of good resources and a fun FAQ. This is the site for the Usenet newsgroup alt.polyamory.

Loving More Magazine: New Models for Relationships, www.lovemore.com. At the Web site you'll find a listing of terms and definitions, personals, chatrooms, email discussions, FAQs, links books, news, and conferences. For more info, contact barry@lovemore.com.

NEW ENGLAND SUPPORT GROUPS:

Family Tree Poly Group

9 South Main Street
Randolph, MA 02368

Ftree@contra.org

Maine-Portland Poly Amorous Life Support
Box 7766, Portland, ME 04112
277-773-6132

fan@biddeford.com

Writer's Revenge

By Peggy Ficland

Is it love that holds me here,
our lives twisted together,
children, home, shared bank account.
and yet you hold another
lover in your arms, not me.
I sleep, alone in the dark
I have no one to hold me.
Here I hold only myself,
not you, you do not touch me.
Do I want to touch you, or
to free me, to free myself,
free to love you or leave you.

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Top Ten Reasons to be Polyamorous:

10. If one of your partners "needs some ME time," maybe another will want to play Parcheesi.
9. That many more wardrobes to steal clothes from.
8. You're sure to like some of your in-laws.
7. One two-year old outnumbered 2 adults. So add an adult!
6. You can blame somebody else for stealing the blankets.
5. Reduces heating bills in the winter.
4. More chance that one of you can fix a car.
3. Your turn to do the dishes comes that much less often.
2. The financial rewards of multiple roommates, but you can still cook breakfast naked.
1. The sex. I mean, DAMN. ▼



Top Tens by Dan Taylor

Top Ten Reasons NOT to be Polyamorous:

10. Even king-sized blankets do not give enough coverage to go over three or more adults.
9. There is no such thing as a big enough bed
8. There is no such thing as "enough hot water"
7. You stand a good chance of wearing all black and learning WAY TOO MUCH about D&D
6. An 18% gratuity will be added to groups of six or more.
5. At least one of them, and maybe more, will be a packrat.
4. You're twice (or three times, or four times, etc) as likely to hate their music.
3. Multiple birthdays/anniversaries add up quick.
2. You can lose friends, your job, your home, and/or your children.
1. Jealousy. I mean, DAMN. ▼

Moving Forward Together

The National Organization for Women is sponsoring "Moving Forward Together: A Les/Bi/Trans/Allies Strategy Summit and Celebration" in Fairlee, Vermont, November 16-18, 2001. Workshops, panels, and discussions will focus on bringing lesbians, bisexual women, trans women, and allies together to foster networks and collaborations to work on a feminist agenda for queer rights. Entertainment will include comedy by Meg Wright, music by Antara and Pamela Means, and a poetry slam led by Alix Olson. The conference is at the Lake Morey Resort where housing is available, and packages include housing and meals. You can also register just for the conference and meals. Check out their website for more information. www.geocities.com/NERegionNOW.

Rally for Safe Schools

On Saturday, October 13, 2001 there will be a rally for "Safe Schools for All" in Concord, New Hampshire sponsored by the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN). Col. Margarethe Cammermeyer (the highest ranking military official to be discharged for sexual orientation) will be the keynote speaker at the rally at the Capitol Plaza in Concord, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Other speakers, musicians, and performers will be present and people are encouraged to stay afterwards for networking sessions. Later that evening, Col. Cammermeyer will be speaking at a fundraising benefit at the Nashua, New Hampshire Marriott; tickets are \$50. For more information, contact Chloe Levreault at 603-493-4534 or clemtmd@aol.com.

What I Did on My Summer Vacation

By Robyn Ochs

For this bi gal, it was a summer framed by bi conferences. In late June I traveled to Rotterdam to attend the European Bisexual Conference, and in mid-August I flew to Vancouver to attend the First North American Conference on Bisexuality, Gender and Sexual Diversity. I had been trying for months to decide which of these two conferences to attend, and finally, decided—what the heck—I would go to both. After all, a year of travel to speaking engagements had built up quite a lot of frequent flyer miles for me.

At the Rotterdam conference, I found close to 200 European activists, as well as a few bisexual luminaries from the United States—Wayne Bryant, Ron Fox, Fritz Klein, Regina Reinhardt, and a few others. All in all, twenty three countries were represented. Inexpensive housing was available to all at a youth hostel located just a few blocks from the conference, and some attendees were put up in local homes. One of the most notable aspects of this conference was its amazing level of organization—bravo to Maurice, Hilde, Koen, Helen, Jolie, Frank, and the others, who walked around the entire weekend equipped with little earphones through which they communicated with one another and magically (from the perspective of the conference attendee!) got things done. It was all quite impressive.

Jolie (whom some of you may have met at Boston-area bi events as she spent last year studying at Mass Art) organized an art exhibition with some of the works auctioned during the last day of the conference. The proceeds from the auction, in excess of fl 1400



Hilde and Helen, conference organizers of the European Bisexual Conference in Rotterdam.

guilders (about \$800) were donated to the Gay Action Network of Amnesty International, with the express wish that this money be used for bisexual causes. The workshops were numerous, and covered the spectrum of topics. I went to an excellent one on bisexuality in French-speaking countries, one on "Building a Strong, Sexy European Bisexual Network," and one on bi counseling issues. There was also a party, sponsored by the conference, which featured, along with a dance floor and a bar, a "black room"—an enclosed area for having [safer] sex—and a corner reserved for s/m "play." I walked into the party and must say I was quite surprised at what I found. But the thing that REALLY shocked me was the cigarette smoke. The Netherlands is quite permissive about smoking, so I stayed at the party only a short while. For more on this conference, check out www.intbiconf.org/.

Fast forward to August in Vancouver.

The North American Conference on Bisexuality, Gender and Sexual Diversity



At the "Building a Strong, Sexy European Bisexual Network" workshop at the European Bisexual Conference in Rotterdam.

was the most diverse conference I have yet attended. The 300 or so attendees included bi folks, transsexuals, other transgendered and gender bending folks, intersexed people, s/m folks, polyamorists, and I strongly suspect, though we were a rather quiet bunch by comparison, a number of vanilla and monogamous types as well. The keynote addresses were given by Eliyahou Farajajé who is, using his own words "a Two Spirit/queer-identified bifag or polyfag of First Nationed (unregistered Ani-Yunwiya)/African/Spanish-Irish/descent native of Berkeley, California" and by Kate Bornstein, performance artist and author of *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us*, and *My Gender Workbook*, and by Salvador Cruz, a Mexican academic focusing on masculinity and sexual diversity.

I facilitated two workshops at this conference: "Teaching Bisexuality" (with Ron Fox), and "Burnout Prevention for Activists." There were great turnouts, especially to the workshop on burnout prevention! This is a topic that is (unfortunately) of concern to many of us. I went to an excellent panel entitled "Transsexuals and Other Scary Monsters" and took part in another excellent discussion about bisexual youth facilitated by a Quebecois educator/researcher. Ragan Rhyne of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) gave an excellent presentation about working with the media. Those are the ones I attended, but the list went on and on: workshops about sex, relationships, s/m, polyamory, gender, activism, spirituality, creativity, and so on.

Audre Lorde once said, and I paraphrase, that if the coalition you are working in does not make you uncomfortable, it is probably not broad enough. There was no fear of that at THIS conference! And I, for one, found that very exciting. If you are interested in seeing the program, go to their web site at [/bi.org/~binetbc/2001/](http://bi.org/~binetbc/2001/).



In Vancouver, at the North American Conference on Bisexuality, Gender and Sexual Diversity. Robyn Ochs (center) with Barbara Carellis and Kate Bornstein.

The next European Conference (EBC2) will be hosted in Dublin in 2003, and will be organized by the irrepressible and lovely members of Bi Irish, one of the sweetest and most enthusiastic groups of activists I have ever had the pleasure to meet. Also in 2003, the next North American Conference will be held in San Diego, and a Mexican activist has announced his intention to organize the third conference in Mexico City in 2005!

In fact, there's another conference coming up right here on the eastern seaboard. Transcending Boundaries: Celebrating the Spectrum of Sexuality, Gender, and Sex (see page 5 sidebar for more details.)

And I know I'll be there. ▽



Lorraine Hutchins (left), co-editor of Bi Any Other Name and Eliyahou Farajajé (far right), writer and activist, at the Vancouver conference.

LGBT Community Center to Open Soon

Rhode Island will soon have a brand new LGBT Community Center. India Point Place, a Home of Diversity and Rhode Island's LGBT Community Center, has completed the purchase of a three family home and an adjacent 10,000 square feet office building. Income from the rental of the office space will cover the mortgage and operating expenses of the Center. The Center will include a cafe/gallery, offices, and resource library. If you'd like to help work on the new center, contact 401-453-3312. It's great to see a center opening with a bi and trans inclusive name from the beginning and we know that the bi activists in Rhode Island are going to be a vibrant part of the new center. Congratulations!!!

The Campaign For Equality Needs You!

The Campaign For Equality has been formed in Massachusetts to oppose a proposed anti-GLBT ballot amendment that would seek to deny all unmarried couples, whether same or different sex, from receiving any domestic partnership benefits from the state or any MA cities and towns. The ballot measure would also alter the state constitution in such a way as to permanently ban the possibility of same-sex marriage in MA. Volunteers are urgently needed. Please call or email Linda at 781-777-1146 or lindab@shore.net for info.

Starting from page 3

tolerant straight world of students and faculty. Times have been rough for my partner and me—only this fall are we actually going to be living in the same state full-time. We are happy to be able to do this, as we had our wedding this summer and it seems appropriate for a married couple to live together. (Yes, we've grown a bit cynical). In any case, being in school meant living overseas and in New York City. Although I have tried to connect to the women's community wherever I've been, it has not been easy. My schedule is time-consuming, and I have been less successful finding the right community for me. But we were hopeful for this fall, to reach out to new people together. Something tells me everything will be different. And spending the evening last night in Boston, with my closest friends, made me appreciate something that I had stopped appreciating the last couple of years.

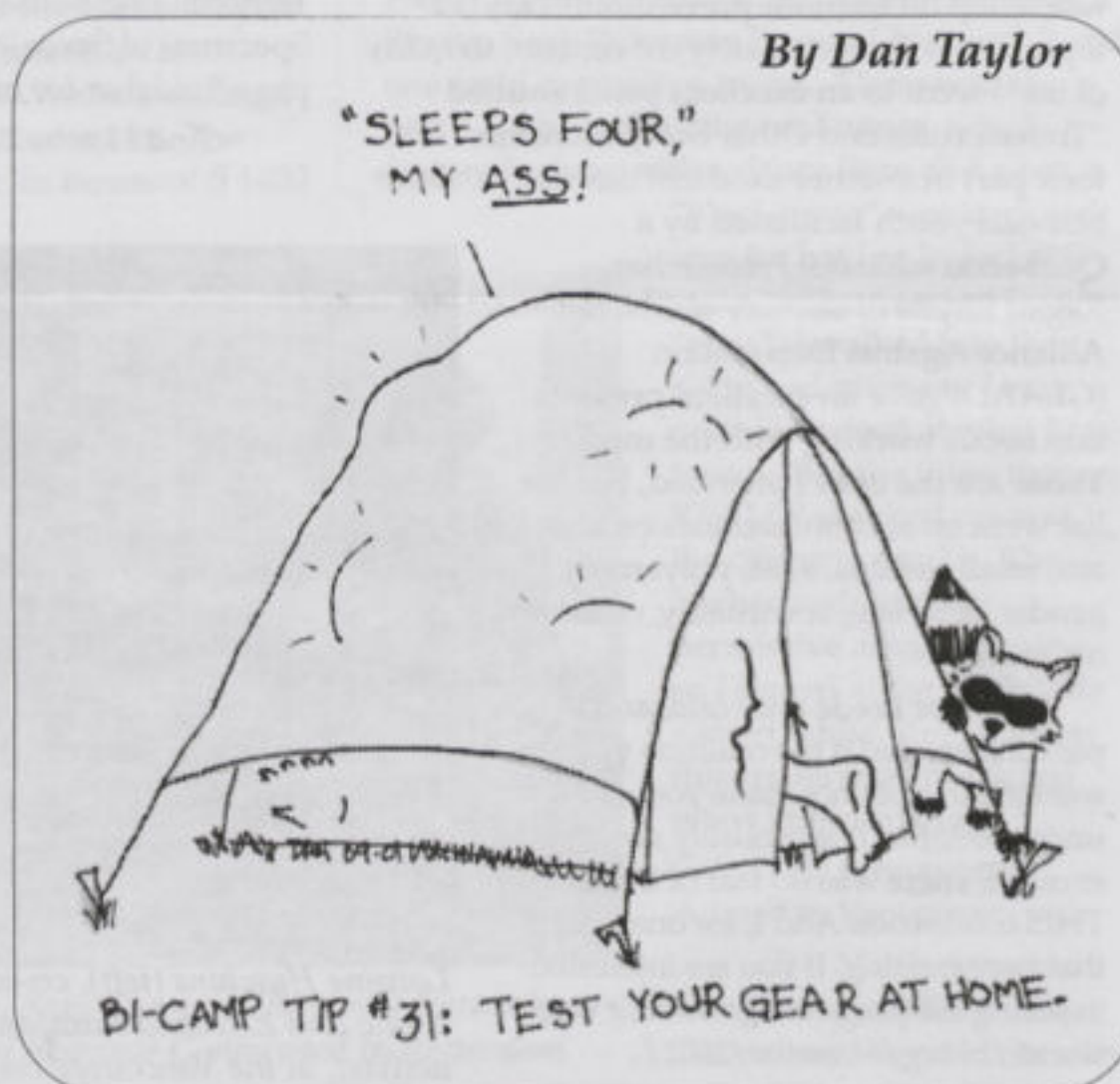
I realized on Tuesday and over the week, as I tried to comprehend what had just happened to the thousands of people trapped in the WTC and to their families and friends, and to all of us, that I have stopped appreciating who I am. I have been depressed, I have been angry, I have been envious, I have been desperate, I have been crazily busy trying to avoid myself. Most of my colleagues accept me on paper, and some truly in their hearts, but they have not walked my path in life. It was becoming so hard to be different all the time. So I gave up trying to be seen as myself, and tried to blend in. Sometimes this meant accepting their praise of my partner even if it felt more like a patronizing pat on the head. Sometimes this meant dwelling on my past — "...if only I hadn't come out, I would still be like all of them;" or "...I should never have gone back to school and left Boston." Sometimes it meant weeks of not discussing my personal life, for fear of being scrutinized more harshly than others.

What I realize now is that acceptance is a mixed blessing - it brings you closer to the

norm, which in turn makes it crystal clear how far away from the norm you really are. And you want to know something? I miss appreciating how unique I am, how far from the norm, how truly special my relationship is, how my difficult journey to coming out is something I used to treasure and have begun to see as a liability. I liked speaking out and acting out and dancing and singing my way into the women's community. I liked the "dyke drama" and the intrigue and the community uprisings and the coming out groups and the book readings and the outrage and the knowing looks at another "one of us" and most of all, the friends.

So where has this all gone? And what does this have to do with the disaster at the World Trade Center? I know where it has gone—it has gone deep into my heart, hidden in some place that I am protecting but hoping to delve into once again. And it is related to the events of Tuesday because the world started over again Tuesday. In a terrible, horrific, enormous way, we all began our lives again on Tuesday. And this is my chance to stop dwelling on my past in a negative way, and try to resurrect those parts of me that I have missed so much. Because I feel that I owe it to every single person who lost their life in the World Trade Center terrorist attack to live my life to its fullest, to be who I am and be proud of who I am and to love who I want to love with all my heart. Because they would have wanted it that way. Because I left for school early that day. ▼

By Dan Taylor



CALENDAR *continued from page 12*

October 19-21 ♦ Friday - Sunday

Transcending Boundaries Conference. This bi and trans conference will be held at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. See sidebar on page 5.

October 20 ♦ Saturday

Biversity Brunch, 11:30 a.m. Brunch will be at Thornton's 100 Peterborough Street in Boston's Fenway area. Nearest T stop is Fenway on the D branch of the Green Line.

October 24 ♦ Wednesday

Bi Coffee and BiHealth, 7 p.m. Biversity and BiHealth will be teaming up for a social event and to distribute bisexual health information at the Diesel Cafe in Davis Square. Come join in the fun and the educational opportunity. Diesel is located at 257 Elm Street in Somerville. T stop is Davis on the Red Line.



October 27-28 ♦ Saturday-Sunday

Spiritfest at Camp Sister Spirit in Overt, MS. A gathering for Southern women to celebrate their sexuality with one another in a safe, rural setting complete with drumming, dreaming, and wonderful women. E-mail Spiritfest99@yahoo.com for more details.

October 28 ♦ Sunday

Biversity Brunch, 1 p.m. Join us at Joshua Tree at 256 Elm Street in Davis Square, Somerville (across the street from the Diesel Cafe). Nearest T is Davis Square on the Red Line.

November 6 ♦ Tuesday

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. The topic is "What Men Think About Dating Bi Women." See October 2nd.

November 7 ♦ Wednesday

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. See October 3rd.

November 10 ♦ Saturday

BiWomen Submissions Deadline. This issue's theme is "Being Bi in the Boonies." See page 2 for more ideas. Send submissions to: *BiWomen*, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA, 02140 or e-mail to nellythrustmor@aol.com.

November 13 ♦ Tuesday

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. See October 9th.

November 14 ♦ Wednesday

Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m. See October 10th.

November 16-18 ♦ Friday - Sunday

Moving Forward Together: Les/Bi/Trans/Allies Strategy & Celebration. See page 7 sidebar for details.

November 17 ♦ Saturday

Biversity Brunch, 11:30 a.m. Brunch will be held at the ever-popular Johnny D's on Holland Street in Davis Square in Somerville. The Davis Square stop on the Red Line is just across the street.

November 18 ♦ Sunday

BBWN Potluck Brunch, noon. Brunch will be held at Denise's in Natick. Bring a dish to share, relax with a great group of women, meet some new people. Call Denise for directions and to let you know you are coming, 508-653-3978.

November 20 ♦ Tuesday

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Tonight's topic is "Thanksgiving Bi Style." See October 2nd.

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. See October 3rd.

November 21 ♦ Wednesday

Bi Coffee and BiHealth, 7 p.m. Biversity and BiHealth will be teaming up for a social event and to distribute bisexual health information at the Diesel Cafe in Davis Square. See October 24th.

November 25 ♦ Sunday

Biversity Brunch, 1 p.m. Enjoy delicious vegetarian food at Buddha's Delight in Boston's Chinatown. On Beach Street between Harrison and Washington. Nearest T stop is Chinatown on the Orange Line.

November 27 ♦ Tuesday

BiWomen mailing, 7-9 p.m. at the Bi Office at 29 Stanhope St. Can you say label, stuff, and seal? Join us on the fourth floor of the Living Center. Socialize during and after when we'll drop by Club Cafe for something to soothe you at the end of the day.

Biversity Boston is the mixed gender bisexual Network of Greater Boston.

Ongoing Events

4th Sundays: Bi People of Color Potluck. NOTE: The PoC Potluck is on hiatus for the summer.

Wednesdays:

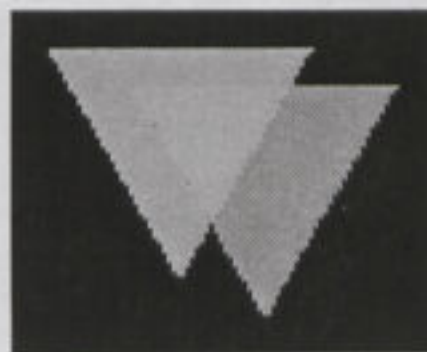
Gendertalk, 8:30-9:30 p.m. on WMBR 88.1 FM. Deals with transgender and queer issues.

Women's Club Nights

Thursdays: Dyke Night at the Midway Cafe, 3496 Washington Street in Jamaica Plain.

Saturdays: Lava Bar in Kenmore Square, 575 Commonwealth Ave. at the Howard Johnson's.

**BiWomen
wants you!!!**



SUBSCRIPTION RATE

for *BiWomen*
(sliding scale)

___ \$0-\$20 (pay what you can)
___ \$20-\$30 (suggested)
___ \$30-\$100 Extra Special Donor

___ Renewal
___ New Subscriber

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
PHONE (Optional) _____

BBWN, P.O. BOX 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140

The "Bi Office"

is the Bisexual Resource Center, located at 29 Stanhope Street, behind Club Cafe, right next door to Bertucci's and just down the street from the Hard Rock Cafe. For info call 617-424-9595.

Ongoing Events

1st & 3rd Tuesdays:

Bi Women's Rap. 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. For info and discussion topics call 617-354-8807.

2nd Tuesdays: Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. Info: 617-354-8807.

1st & 3rd Thursdays:

Bi Women's Resource & Support Group. 7 p.m. at the Women's Health Consortium, 29 Vaughan Mall, Portsmouth, NH. For info call 603-431-1669 or contact Sue Corcoran at schmoo@nh.ultranet.com.

CALENDAR

October 2 ♦ Tuesday

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. A discussion group for bisexual, bi-friendly, and questioning women. Topic: "Lesbian Perceptions of Bi Women." Lesbian Rap attendees will join us. Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., 617-354-8807.

BBWN Volunteer Serving at the Boston Living Center Ladies' Night, 5:30 p.m. Help serve the women clients at the Living Center's Ladies' Night Dinner in the second floor cafeteria. Your own meal is provided for you, too. 29 Stanhope St., Boston. Nearest T is the Back Bay Orange Line Station. Call Ellyn to volunteer, 617-623-5535.

October 3 ♦ Wednesday

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. An informal support group for people who think they may be bisexual or attracted to more than one sex. A small donation is requested to help pay for the space. The group meets at the Bisexual Resource Center at 29 Stanhope St. in Boston. Call 617-424-9595 for info.

October 4 ♦ Thursday

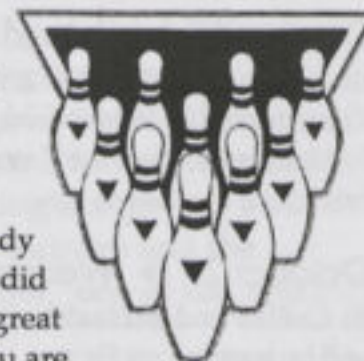
When the Drama Club Isn't Enough, 7 p.m. Authors Kim Westheimer and Jeff Perrotti will be speaking at New Words Bookstore about changing the climate of schools for queer students. This is a new book with strategies for parents, teachers, and students who are working to ensure safe schools for all kids. 186 Hampshire Street, Cambridge, 617-876-5310. Nearest T is Central Square on the Red Line.



October 7 ♦ Sunday

BBWN Bowling

Brunch, noon. Meet at Lanes and Games on Rt 2 in Cambridge. We'll bowl a few strings and then go find a place to have a late lunch. Be ready for some big laughs; we did this last year and had a great time. Contact Ellyn if you are interested in going, 617-623-5535 or nellythrustmor@aol.com.



October 9 ♦ Tuesday

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. Meets on the second Tuesday of each month. Call 617-354-8807 for directions.

October 10 ♦ Wednesday

Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m. All bi community members welcome to attend. The meeting is on the fourth floor of the Boston Living Center, 29 Stanhope St. in Back Bay.

October 11 ♦ Thursday

National Coming Out Day, 7-9 p.m. People around the world take the opportunity to come out to people they know and to support those who have newly come into our communities. Local campuses and organizations sponsor visibility actions and events. Check our your local area for details.

October 16 ♦ Tuesday

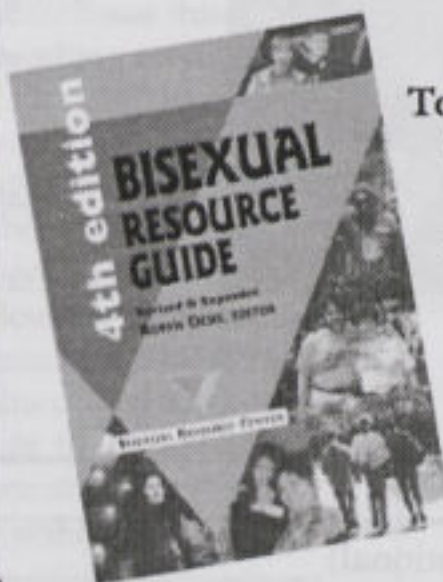
Coming Out as Bisexual. 7-9 p.m. See October 3rd.

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Topic: "Show 'n Tell" Bring something to share that is important to you. See October 2nd.

October 18 ♦ Thursday

Yentl's Revenge: The Next Wave of Jewish Feminism, 7 p.m. A reading at New Words by contributors to this new anthology about Jewish women and their experience of feminism in the new generation. 186 Hampshire Street, Cambridge, 617-876-5310. Nearest T is Central Square on the Red Line.

Do you have your Bisexual Resource Guide yet?

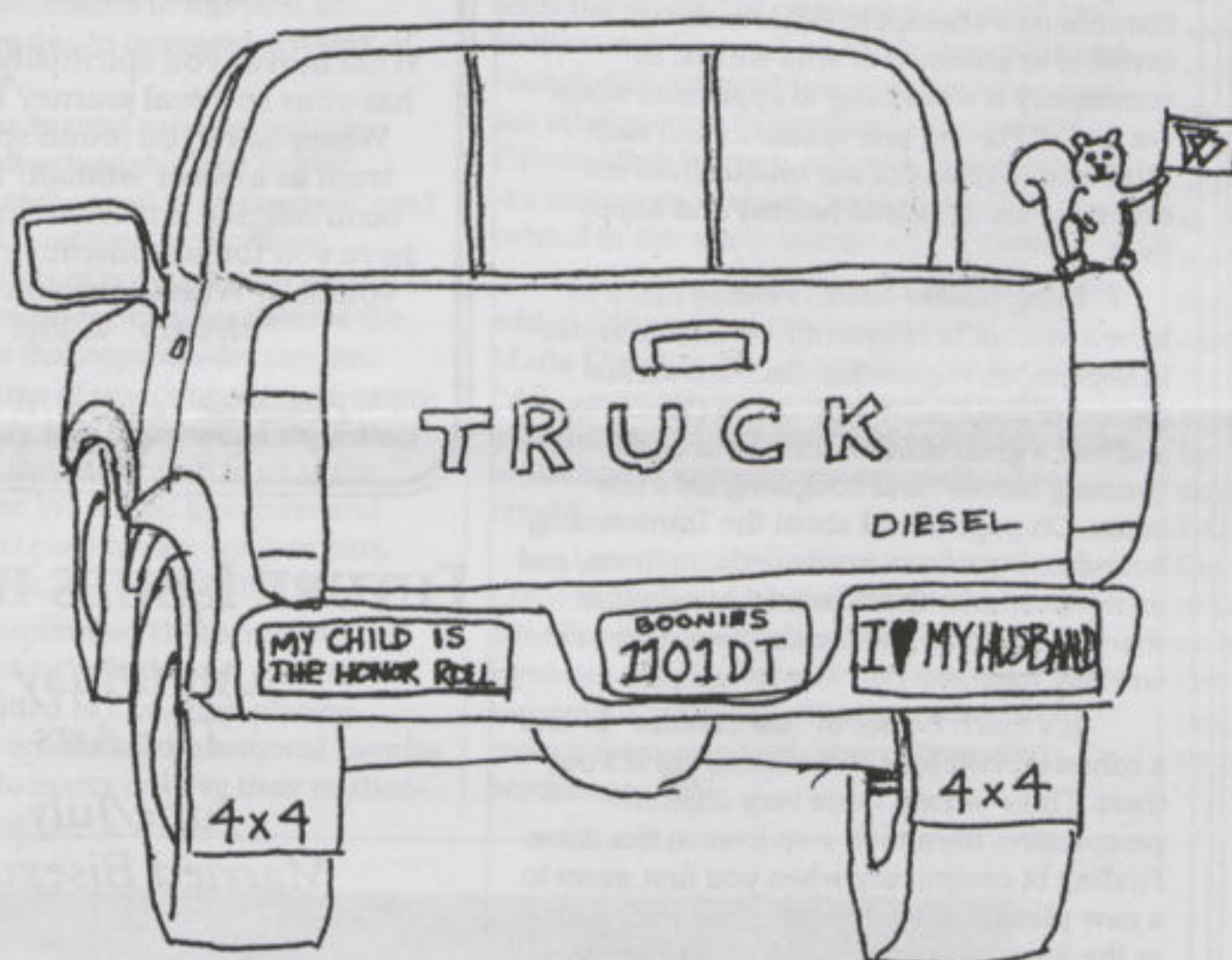


To order, send check or money order for \$13.95 (payable to BRC), with your name and address, to BRC, Dept. BBWN, P.O. Box 1026, Boston, MA 02117.

Or check out the BRC Web page at www.biresource.org to buy the Guide and other great bi products.

CALENDAR continues on page 11

Being Bi in the Boonies



Cartoon by Dan Taylor

BI-CAMP TIP #22: IN THE BOONIES, STRAIGHT WOMEN IN PICKUP TRUCKS MAY THROW OFF YOUR "GAY DAR."

My First Night "Out"

By Dan Taylor

I'm fond of telling people about how the town I grew up in used to have a gas station, until my best friend moved away. My town was just that small; everyone knew everyone else. I thought until my senior year that everyone knew everything about everyone else. It seemed like no one could keep a secret in a community that small. My dorm in college housed more people than lived in my entire town. My high school was grades 7-12 for two towns, and had just over 300 students. The biggest event of the year was the junior prom, which the seniors were encouraged to attend, if only to flesh it out; twenty-five couples make for a pretty underpopulated prom.

First continues on page 4

Stay Connected

By Katalya

At one time I helped edit *BiWomen*, and was in the position of encouraging readers to write about their experiences. "Write anything!" I'd beg. Now I see how hard it is. Anything I write about my experience as a bisexual woman—any opinion, insight, emotion, desire—can change at a moment's notice. In some ways, I'm a moving target. It's one of the joys and frustrations of this gift of bisexuality, this glorious and powerful and ever-changing facet of who I am. Indeed, it is one of the joys of simply being human.

Connected continues on page 6

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Binational Couples and Immigration Laws.....	3
Displaced New Yorker.....	5
Book Review.....	7
Transcending Boundaries Conference 2001.....	8
Poetry.....	10
Calendar.....	11-12

Volunteers of the Month

Gail
Robyn Ochs

Andrea

Peggy

Abby

Kathleen

Dan Taylor

Denise

Rhonda

And many more
fabulous people!
You know who
you are!

BiWomen is
published
bi-monthly.

Editor:

Ellyn Ruthstrom

Printed on
recycled paper

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network is a feminist, not-for-profit collective organization whose purpose is to bring women together for support and validation. It is meant to be a safe environment in which women of all sexual self-identities, class backgrounds, racial, ethnic and religious groups, ages, abilities and disabilities are welcome. Through the vehicles of discussion, support, education, outreach, political action and social groups related to bisexuality, we are committed to the goals of full acceptance as bisexuals within the gay and lesbian community, and to full acceptance of bisexuality and the liberation of all gay people within the larger society.

Editor's Notes

Community is so important, no matter where you find it, no matter how you define it for yourself. Finding kindred souls is one of those human experiences that keeps us happy on a really basic level. There are so many ways that mainstream as well as gay communities attempt to either make us invisible or ashamed of who we are. Bi community is something to appreciate when we find it. Having safe spaces to find each other and to celebrate our unique lives are necessary for us to lead healthy and happy lives.

Being Boston-based, I feel so lucky to have a vibrant bi community available to me. In September, we marked the third annual Celebrate Bisexuality Day with a Dance Party and had a great time honoring our local "unsung heroes" and boogieing for a few hours. On page 8 read about the Transcending Boundaries conference where the bi, trans, and intersex communities shared a weekend of sharing, learning, and looking to a future of working together.

It's much harder in "the boonies" to find a cohesive, visible bi community, but it's out there. Three writers share very different perspectives from their own lives in this issue. Finding bi community when you first move to a new place is often difficult. Resources such as the *Bisexual Resource Guide* (see ad on page

12) and some online lists are great ways to find other bisexual people and organizations. Keep in touch.



Photo by Alene Smith

Ellyn
Ruthstrom

NEXT IN *BiWOMEN*

The *BiWomen* theme for
February/March is:

Spirituality

What moves you spiritually? Where has your spiritual journey led you? Where have you found spiritual truth as a queer woman? Is your birth religion important to you or have you found something new for yourself? When have you felt the "mystery" of life?

Deadline: January 16, 2002

FUTURE ISSUES IN 2002

April/May

The Arts

June/July

Married Bisexuals

PLEASE SUBMIT TO *BiWOMEN*!

Send articles, calendar entries, letters, artwork, photos, news, and views to:

BiWomen

P.O. Box 400639

Cambridge, MA 02140

or via e-mail to

NellyThrustmor@aol.com

*If you do not want your name
published, please tell us.*

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by the authors and artists.

Love Sees No Borders Supports New Immigration Act

In a press release dated Oct. 26, 2001, the organization Love Sees No Borders urged the House of Representatives to take immediate action on the Permanent Partners Immigration Act (PPIA), H.R. 690 to protect American families in this time of extreme pressure due to increased scrutiny of foreign nationals.

"Given our current national security situation it is understandable that tighter controls undoubtedly need to be enacted," said Leslie Bulbuk of Love Sees No Borders.

"However, the basis of our American society is the family, and same-sex families deserve the same protections that opposite-sex families receive. In this time of severe need, our foreign-born partners may face deportation regardless of the hardships this may cause to us as the American partner. We would like to remind Congress that our partners are not terrorists, but rather our lives, and our families."

Since the September 11 terrorist attacks, tougher immigration policies and proposals have been submitted to Congress, placing unwanted stress on same-sex binational couples who are unable to marry or have their relation-

ships recognized by any other means in order to gain immigration rights. The increased tightening of immigration policies makes binational couples vulnerable and at risk of suffering extended separations. The PPIA adds the words "or permanent partner" next to the word "spouse" on the Immigration and Nationality Act, enabling Americans in same-sex relationships to sponsor their partners. Fifteen other Western countries provide same-sex immigration rights, leaving the U.S. behind in this major human rights front.

"Binational same-sex couples are facing added dangers and challenges now," said Marta Donayre, from Love Sees No Borders. "All we are asking for is a basic protection granted to opposite-sex couples and this is the protection from being unnecessarily separated."

Love Sees No Borders was founded by Leslie Bulbuk and Marta Donayre to bring attention to the injustices faced by binational same-sex couples because they are not recognized for immigration purposes. For more information visit, www.loveseesnoborders.org.

BBWN Logo Contest

The Boston Bisexual Women's Network needs a logo and is sponsoring a contest to find it. Are you creative? Can you design something that is eye-catching? The logo will be used in *BiWomen*, and other BBWN publications, and maybe even a t-shirt or buttons! And once we have the new logo we can make a new banner to carry in Pride next year! All submissions to the contest must be turned in by February 1, 2002. They can be sent to BBWN, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140, or forwarded on e-mail to nellythrustmor@aol.com. Get out those crayons (only kidding) and start creating!



Bowling Bisexuals

The BBWN Bowling Brunch started at Lanes and Games in Cambridge and, after working up a good appetite, moved on to The Joshua Tree in Davis Square in Somerville. Lots of laughs and bowling tips were exchanged and all agreed to come back for more. Come out January 20th for another bowling extravaganza. See calendar on page 12 for details.



LGBT Prisoners Book Program

LGBT prisoners need your books! The Prison Book Program is in need of books about and by lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and trans/TS/TV folks (we are currently in dire need of books about gay men and trans folks: fiction, history, health, etc.). The only way prisoners can receive books is directly from publishers or from bookstores (Prison Book Program is affiliated with the Lucy Parson Bookstore). New and used books, paperback only, are appreciated. You can drop them off at Prison Book Program, 110 Arlington Street in Boston on Tuesdays 6-8 p.m. or Thursdays 7-9 p.m. Or mail them to: Prison Book Program, 110 Arlington St., Boston, MA 02116, ATTN: Debbie. For more information, call Debbie Richards at 617-423-3298. Every book makes a difference!

First from page 1

Convinced that if I didn't attend my junior prom I would be a social reject until the end of my days, I blackmailed a freshman into taking me. I had already been rejected by the seven junior class males without dates, so my choices were dwindling. I blackmailed him by doing the English homework for every female in the freshman class and threatening his entire high school dating career. Bear in mind that this is much easier when there are only 20 women in the freshman class! After two days of agonizing, he agreed to take me. It was a disaster, and I was relieved when it ended.

So when people began to talk about the prom again during my senior year, I just hid deeper in a book or magazine. Until one article caught my eye; May's edition of *Seventeen* magazine had an article about a young lesbian couple who were going to their prom together, both in tuxedos. There were interviews with their classmates, some supportive, some not. I was amazed and envious. What a fabulous way to bid farewell to the hideous experience my rural high school had been. I was sure that everyone in my school would feel like I ruined the prom if I brought a girl. It was the perfect revenge for the year before, and the rest of high school to boot. My best friend, who lived in Boston, agreed immediately.

I bought the prom tickets on the last possible day. The class treasurer asked me for my date's name. I spelled it for her; Ariane was far too exotic a name for her to assign gender. When asked, I said my date was "a friend from Boston." I think that my secretive gloating must have shown through, but no one let on that they could tell I was hiding anything.

Ariane wore her mom's tuxedo and loaned me a simple black dress. Imagine my surprise when a friendly crowd formed around us. People I barely knew came up to my table and began to whisper congratulations in my ear. One of the boys told me with a breaking voice that he had been waiting for me to come out. Suddenly an entire world that had been invisible revealed itself to me. Girls and boys alike came up and shared the drama of their high school dating experience with me. So many people came out to me, I began to wonder if

there was something different in the water in my town.

Our new friends had brought opposite-sex dates, so Ariane and I were the only same-sex couple on the floor. We all left the prom early to grab breakfast at a twenty-four hour restaurant, and stayed out talking until five. I told them that I was straight; I explained—and apologized for—my reason for bringing Ariane to the prom. They said it was okay, but didn't reach out to me again. It was as if they had never come out to me.

The last month of high school was pretty rough. I think I upset all 300 students, and most of the faculty. Since I had denied being queer, the other queer kids distanced themselves pretty quickly—they didn't need to catch any of the heat that was on me. The straight kids, on the other hand, were brutal to the "lesbian." I had slurs written on my locker and textbooks. Someone left a dead fish in my locker. I was threatened with violence several times, and shoved into the lockers once, but nothing serious happened. I graduated, had a lonely summer, and went off to college in Boston.

Still, I regret that I wasn't ready to come out that night at the prom. It was the only time in high school I really felt included. I might still be friends with some of the kids who came out to me if I had had the courage to match theirs. I think about my ten-year reunion coming up next year, and wonder how many of my classmates eventually became publicly queer, and how many of them stayed in our small town and are still hiding. Should I come out to them now? Should I bring my boyfriend? Can I do both? I have a year to decide, and I think I'll need all of it. ▼



Photo by Alene Smith

Displaced New Yorker Marooned in the Suburbs

by Peggy Fieland

A big piece of me is still astonished that I have to drive to the grocery store. I am a native New Yorker, born and raised in Manhattan. I grew up on East 86th Street. My grandmother lived on West 86th Street, and various other relatives were scattered around the area, none farther away than Queens or Scarsdale.

Sunday dinner out was a ritual enjoyed by all of us—my parents, my sister, and me—right up through my teen years. Every Sunday when I was young we would visit my grandmother, then go out to eat at Tony's Italian Kitchen on West 72nd Street. The restaurant was owned by the chef and the maitre d' and served what I still firmly believe was the best antipasto in the city. My father, the youngest of six children, son of immigrant parents, derived enormous satisfaction out of having the money to pay the bill.

After my grandmother died, when I was about seven years old, we continued to eat out on Sundays, either there or at House of Chan on the East Side. I complained mightily about my parents' lack of a sense of adventure in choosing restaurants, always vowing that I would take my children, if any, out to eat at a wider choice of eating places. In fact, when my own sons were young, we limited ourselves to a small number of restaurants, partly because we were then living in the suburbs where there was less choice and partly because of menu choices and kid-friendliness.

My mother walked to do all of her grocery shopping. She knew the clerks in all of the stores she frequented and they knew her. She shopped at the vegetable stand on the corner of Madison and 87th Street, bought meat at the kosher butcher up in the next block, and shopped for everything else at Gristede's. She could even get them to deliver her order right to our door: no need to carry the groceries home.

I, on the other hand, drive everywhere. Like my mother, I frequent a number of markets to do my shopping, but it's nowhere near as convenient. I have a five minute drive to Roche Brothers where I go when I am pressed for time, a fifteen minute drive to Bread and Circus for meat and fresh vegetables, a twenty minute drive to Stop and Shop or BJ's for staples. I drive twenty-five miles each way to get to work; while my father took the bus or subway two miles down to his office.

My older kids got their drivers' licenses as soon as they could. My high school didn't offer driver's ed, and I didn't learn to drive until I was in my twenties.

As a teenager, I traveled all around the

city by myself, including travelling to music and ballet lessons after school. I remember hanging out with a bunch of friends in the Horn and Hardart on 47th Street and Broadway, then going home by myself on the subway. My kids, on the other hand, are forced to get a ride, or to ride a bike if it's close by. If they want to hang out somewhere, more than likely they're going to have to persuade someone to drive them to the mall.

I have been subject to only mild harassment about being gay, by my partner's son's friends. Evidently they taped a paper phallus to our basketball pole. The only problem was that I didn't notice it (grin). My partner found it still there when she came back from a trip several days later. She claims she left it on the kitchen table for me to find, but I never saw it—honest!

I bemoan how far it is to drive to many of the events that interest me. The time and distance involved are often daunting, and as a full-time employed parent, time isn't something I have a lot of. I'd love to live in a more densely populated area, with more gay/lesbian/bi folks closer to me than they are now. Still, there are other queer people out here, even in my very small town, though it took me a while to find them.

I can't remember who told me about our local queer women's group. I was complaining about knowing no dykes in my area when a friend piped up, "Do you know Lisa? She lives near you, and I think she belongs to a group out there." Ah, community. The group is full of wonderful women and meetings are frequent. It's wonderful to know I'm not the only one, that there are other queer women only a short drive away.

I still want a really good supermarket within walking distance, though. ▼

Third Wave Feminist Anthology

Call to "third wave" feminists/womanists! An anthology is being compiled on the organizing and activism third wave feminists are doing around the issue(s) of violence against women in the U.S. A few examples include: participating in a women's action coalition engaged in consciousness raising activities, doing personal outreach, community education, organizing rallies/marches/protests, participating in clinic defense or cop watch. The book will be by and for young women activists with a combination of theoretical and experiential perspectives on activism and community organizing. It will explore individual and/or organizational process. Submission deadline is February 15, 2002! E-mail thirdwavevaw@hotmail.com. The editors are looking for essays/articles up to 15 pages by activists aged 16-30. Please send submissions to: Third Wave VAW, c/o Katy Otto, P.O. Box 297, College Park, MD 20741-0297.

How'd the B get in the LGBT?

Support Lani's book project
My Grassroots Are Showing:
stories, speeches, special affections 1975 - 2000
and
Passing For Other: primal creams and forbidden dreams
poetry and prose 1975 - 2000
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www.lanikaahumanu.com

Winter Gender-Free Dance Camp

Lavender Country & Folk Dancers are holding their Winter Gender-Free Dance Camp the weekend of February 22-24, 2002. The camp is being held at the Becket/Chimney Corners YMCA Camp in Becket, MA. No partner or previous experience is necessary. This camp will feature contra dancing, English country dancing, and international dancing. For more information and to register, contact Bob Peterson at 978-597-5861, CampReg@lcfcd.org or visit www.lcfcd.org/lcfcd/. If you register before January 11 there is a discount.

Connected from page 1

For most of my life I have lived in the city. I have identified as bisexual since the age of 18. I am 40. Most of my serious relationships have been with men. My longest-term relationship—ten years—was with a woman, an amazing, wonderful woman for whom I would do anything and go anywhere, and did. We moved out to the “boonies” for her career. Although I grieved leaving the city and my friends and family, I welcomed the peace and quiet of the country, and soon made new friends.

I immediately realized that with the move away from the city I had also moved away from the bi community. This is not to say there weren't bi folk around; I'm sure there were. I just didn't find them. In fact, I didn't bother looking for them. My partner and I were happy, alone together. We made friends, mostly straight, some gay and lesbian. To this day I don't know if any of my friends were bisexual. After years of being openly bi, I had begun to accept and perpetuate the polarizing of my sexuality—I allowed myself to be identified as lesbian by all but my closest friends.

On the plus side, I was pleased that my partner and I were “out” as a couple. I developed a sense that many people in our circle of friends felt proud of themselves for having lesbians as friends. It demonstrated to others, and confirmed to themselves, that they were open-minded, compassionate, and “cool.” I don't mean to imply that that's a bad thing, not in the least. We all need that sort of encouragement when we are struggling with our own prejudices and our discomfort with people different than ourselves. The fact that we were two women was generally not an issue for anyone, it seemed. This was a wonderful surprise. My city prejudices are revealing themselves here: I guess I assumed that folks out in the “boonies” would be less sophisticated, more conservative, and so on. In fact, I had been specifically warned to expect some amount of “culture shock,” and found it to be

less severe than anticipated.

I was completely unprepared, however, for the changes from within, the drama under my own roof that resulted from the isolation of country life.


My partner was not very comfortable talking about sex and sexuality. This, combined with not living and breathing my bisexuality but instead living as lesbian, set the stage for an intense, overwhelming attraction to a male friend of mine. He was married, and I was friends with him and his wife.

In retrospect, I can now see that by not connecting with a bi community, I had given myself no allies. A community of bi friends might have helped me handle my situation differently. In a nutshell, despite a lifelong commitment to openness and honesty, and despite the clear risk of tremendous loss, I did not remain faithful to my loved one. Our marriage subsequently ended. I lost nearly everything that was dear to me at that time—my marriage, my home, my friends, my integrity. I left town and moved back East. (His wife never found out, which is why I am writing this article anonymously.)

A bi community might have helped me deal with the conflict, guilt, fear and desire that caused me to close up, implode, and eventually betray the trust of my partner; and a bi community might well have steered me away from the self-loathing that quickly followed. I became clinically depressed for about a year, in need of medication and weekly therapy.

This is all water under the bridge. My ex is very happy now with someone new. I am also very happy, in a relationship with a man with whom I look forward to spending the rest of my life—someone who believes as strongly as I do in the need for open, honest communication. My ex understands her role in what happened, and realizes that more communication, compassion, and acceptance might have allowed our drama to unfold differently.

Some people might wonder why there's a need for a bi community. Why does anyone need a community based on such a private, personal thing as sexuality? I now see that it's the deeply personal nature of my sexuality that necessitates a community. Someday I'll need to talk with someone—someone who truly understands. Although the bi community is one of the most diverse communities imaginable, our common thread of bisexuality is special, challenging and perhaps, for some, not a thing to experience in isolation—whether in the country or the city.

Stay connected. Read and support this newsletter. Be a part of the bi community. It just might change your life. 

La Red para Lesbianas y Mujeres Bisexuales Maltratadas *The Network for Battered Lesbians and Bisexual Women*

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Book Review: *A Blind Man Can See How Much I Love You*, by Amy Bloom, Random House, 2000.

Reviewed by Ellyn Ruthstrom

I discovered the writer Amy Bloom this year and can't help myself from recommending her books to anyone who asks—and many who don't. Her latest is a collection of short stories, *A Blind Man Can See How Much I Love You*. Bloom is an out bi writer and psychotherapist who is now living with a female partner after having been married to a man earlier in life. She's identified as bi her whole adult life. I mention this because it's so refreshing to have an out bi person speak of that identity in such a positive way and acknowledge her experience.

Bloom has done something very unusual with her writing. Her first collection of short stories, *Come to Me*, included a short story about the characters Julia and Lionel (step-

mother and stepson). These characters reappear in *A Blind Man*... many years later and we can see how the startling events of the first story have affected their lives—or not. Bloom also took a short story from her first collection and extended it into her first novel, *Love Invents Us*.

The title story is from a mother's perspective as she helps her daughter, Jessie, go through the transition surgery to being a man. The mother had hoped Jessie was "just a lesbian" and had even taken her on a trip to Northampton, Massachusetts in the hopes she would see a lesbian world she could belong in. But Jessie insists that it is more than that and her mother supports her unequivocally. As the mother spends time in the hospital she meets someone and has her own life changing experience while Jessie recuperates.

"Rowing to Eden" details the lives of three people as they deal with cancer in their midst. Mai is the cancer patient, Charley is her husband, and Ellie is Mai's oldest friend who happens to be a lesbian and a cancer survivor herself. This is such a beautiful story, but not

Review continues on page 10

Law School Survey on LGBT Issues

The Law School Admission Council (LSAC) has completed a survey indicating that most U.S. law schools are actively fostering gay-friendly environments on their campuses and in their classrooms. According to the survey, 100 percent of the 168 law schools that reported have policies that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. 68% of the schools have at least one openly gay faculty member; 76% have active LGBT student organizations; 52 percent offer courses specific to LGBT issues; and 38% offer domestic partnership benefits to faculty, staff, or students. The survey was issued as part of a newly revised brochure produced by the LSAC that encourages LGBT students to apply to law school. An online version of the brochure includes additional detailed survey information at www.LSAC.org/LGBT. LSAC also offers OUTlooks, a 30-minute video that looks at issues facing the queer law school candidates.



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For more information, call the NELA hotline (617)876-6352

Or visit our website - www.nla-newengland.org

This is an 18+ event



Call for Papers

In the past ten years the diagnosis, treatment and management of intersex conditions has become hotly debated. The critical follow-up of the John/Joan case and the political activism of the Intersex Society of North America have brought intersexuality to world-wide public attention and has led to dramatic changes in neonatal sex assignment. The Journal of Gay and Lesbian Psychotherapy is preparing a special volume, to be guest-edited by Vernon Rosario, M.D., that engages the many theoretical and clinical issues concerning intersexuality. The Journal is particularly interested, although not exclusively, in articles that explore psychotherapy with intersexed children and adults (or their family members), psychosexual development, and psychological adjustment. We welcome quantitative and qualitative work from clinicians and intersexed individuals. First draft submissions are due by February 1, 2002. Contact Dr. Vernon Rosario, UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute, 760 Westwood Blvd. Rm. C8-862, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

Transcending Boundaries Conference 2001

By Dan Taylor

What a thrill! As was said in the community meeting of the first Transcending Boundaries Conference, it was so great to have a conference that focussed on "everyone but the L's and G's." (*The Lesbians and Gays.*) Although there were bugs to work out, all in all, it was fantastic for an inaugural conference. And plans are already afoot for the second conference next year.

I wasn't able to get to the mixer on Friday night, so my first exposure to Yale's campus in New Haven, Connecticut was bright and early Saturday morning. The day was gorgeous, and the beautiful weather continued throughout the weekend. It appeared that the average conference attendee was not used to being awake at nine in the morning, regardless of nocturnal activities, and a good many of them had slept little since the mixer.

Evelyn Mantilla, Connecticut's first openly bisexual state representative, was billed as keynote speaker for the opening plenary, but for unspecified reasons was unable to attend. Emi Koyama was the unexpected star of the opening plenary session, with a fabulous speech on issues facing intersexed persons, followed by a lively question and answer period. Then off we all dashed to our first sessions, encountering the most troublesome issue of the weekend; there were only fifteen minutes between workshops, and a maze-like, stair-filled, windowless facility to find them in.

The first workshop I attended was "The Transgender Experience" with Lisa Hartley. This workshop was obviously designed as a basic education for people who know little or nothing about transgendered persons. She appeared to be surprised by the active skepticism she encountered in her audience. She struck a sour note, at least with me, when she described transgenderism as a continuum flowing from closeted transgendered persons through occasional cross-dressers through to post-op transsexuals, which I felt put too strong an emphasis on dress. She also completely ignored the issue of those people who do not identify as either gender, even after it had been brought up by another attendee. I did feel it would be a useful workshop for social workers and educators to take as an introduction to transgendered issues, but was oversimplified for the audience at the conference.

After lunch, I went to Tom Limoncelli's "Facilitating Support Groups," which was by far the best organized workshop of my

weekend. His format allowed a lot of time for discussion and example, but still brought us through the layout of a sample support group in the hour allotted. The most useful discussion we had was about the differences in mediating a support group, a discussion group, and a social group. Several of the other workshop attendees had mediated support groups before, and outlined pitfalls to avoid such as allowing

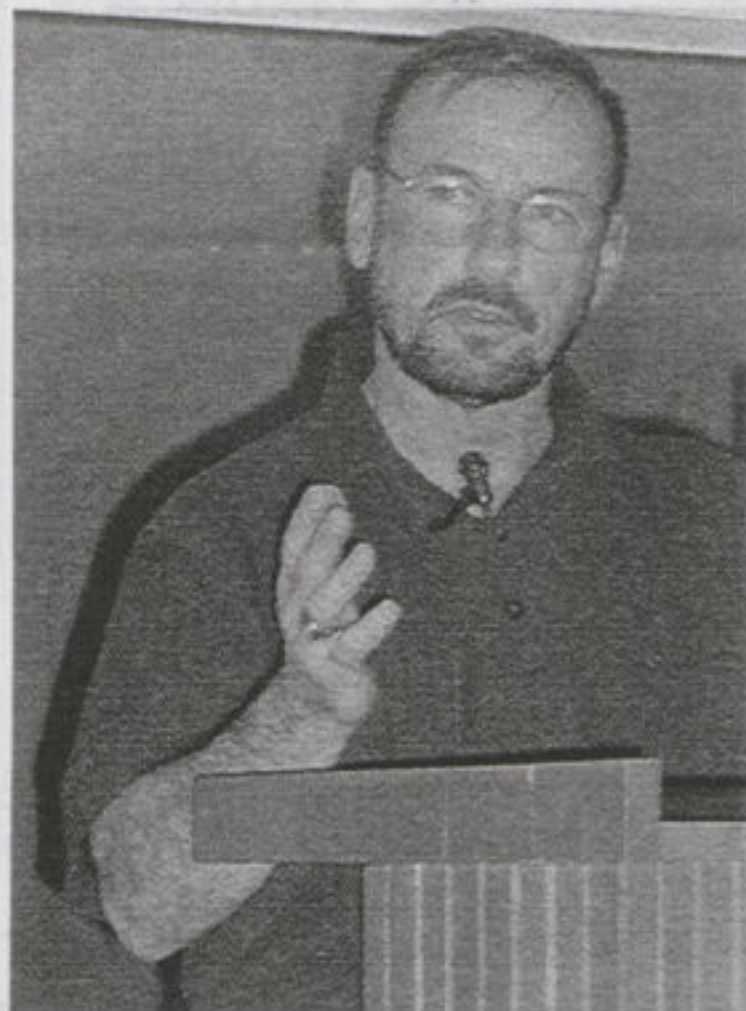


Photo by Robyn Ochs

Closing plenary speaker, Jamison Greene, at the Transcending Boundaries 2001 conference.

the support group to turn into a social event, or letting the group stray from topic to topic, preventing deeper discussion of any one topic. One fun rule of thumb Tom gave us was the "fifteen-second rule"; the theory behind this is that if you can let the lull in conversation continue for fifteen seconds, your group will answer. It takes fifteen seconds for someone in the group to get together a response to many difficult and useful questions.

As a marvelous segue from Tom's workshop, I went directly to co-facilitating a "Coming Out" workshop with Sheeri Kitzer. Although people seemed a bit worn out by this point, this workshop had the largest attendance of any workshop I saw during the conference. Stories, advice, and support were shared in the hour we spent together, and I felt it went really well.

After the dinner break, there was an open mic/coffeehouse at a Yale University student club. While the performances were a mixed bag and the open mic ran an hour long, the sense of community made the time fly by. Then there was a dance in the same space, but the DJ played loudly enough that I was among the fairly large crowd that escaped to the bar downstairs and the alley outside, where conversation was possible. One surprising aspect to the off-site social time was the Yale students who wandered in from the campus, and began to party, without much visible hesitation, with the conference attendees.

The next morning thankfully began a little later, and breakfast was more well-rounded, this time including fruit, juice, and muffins as well as doughnuts and coffee (no decaf). I was deeply in conversation with Raven Kaldera (a family friend and workshop presenter) when Susan Wolf asked that anyone coming into her workshop "Spirituality at the Edge" get in a little early, and day two was off to the races!


"Spirituality" triumphed almost more in spite of Susan Wolf's speaking style than because of it. Susan began the workshop with a disclaimer that this was not a forum for proselytizing or skepticism, and asked that those so inclined find another workshop. She spent the first half hour of the workshop sharing her own spiritual journey, with Sunday morning church bells an appropriate counterpoint. Then she demonstrated how spirituality can lead us to deeper self-awareness by inviting each of us in turn to speak through, or be spoken through by, her "talking stick." Each member of the workshop, seated in a circle, took the stick and shared some insight, often apparently surprising themselves, into their own spirituality. It was a wonderful community experience, and deeply emotional.

At this point, the entire conference piled into one lecture hall, and held an hour-long community meeting discussing the plans for next year, and the problems, and treasures, of this year. One problem for both speakers and listeners, however, was the lack of amplification equipment. Despite these problems, and the community tendency to ramble on, many important decisions were made, the greatest of which being an offer from the queer student group of Central Connecticut State University to host next year's conference. Then we all went outside to savor the fantastic weather and a provided lunch of sandwiches. Thanks are due to Sheeri and Wayne for using the lunch-time forum to sell guides, pins, and t-shirts!

My final workshop of the weekend was "How Safe is Safe Enough?" another workshop

I co-facilitated with Sheeri Kritzer. This discussion of safer sex techniques, and risk management was another highly successful workshop, in my humble opinion. Although less well attended than I might have hoped, everyone had a lot of experience to share and questions to answer. It was probably a good thing that the turnout was so small (I think we had seven, plus me and Sheeri) because for as personal a subject as sexual risk assessment, I think a lecture would not have served nearly as well.

The final event was the closing plenary, with Jamison Greene as keynote speaker, who gave a wonderful reading and speech on the nature of gender, and the politics of gender identity, given depth by anecdotes from his personal story of transition. As might have been expected, the plenary ran a bit over schedule, but several people gave voice to my own reluctance to leave what had been a magical weekend.

I'd like to thank Vincent Cangiano, Lisa Jacobs, Alex Gino, Alice Leibowitz, and Erica Waples for organizing the conference, as well as the conference's sponsors: BiNet USA, the Bisexual Resource Center, Bi Ways at Yale, BiZone, Biversity, Conn-Bi-Nation, Connecticut Outreach Society, LGBT Co-op at Yale, the New England Leather Association, and the New York Area Bisexual Network. This conference was a transforming experience that I will remember forever. Here's to next year! 

OUT Top 100



The December issue of Out magazine includes their listing of the top 100 greatest gay success stories of 2001, and several bisexual people are prominently featured. In fact, three of the nine faces on its cover are of out bisexuals. On the music scene Ani DiFranco, Michael Stipe, and Corin Tucker of the band Sleater Kinney get kudos. For film, Angelina Jolie is noted as omnisexual and her role as Lara Croft in Tomb Raider is touted as "[proving] that women can rule in action films." Where have they been? And, Margaret Cho and Rebecca Walker get their due in the book section. It is, of course, very nice to see the b-word being used and to have some amazing people from our community acknowledged for their work. But, I do wish that Out (and all the other gay press) would stop using Anne Heche as a punching bag to justify their biphobia.

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December/January 2002 • Vol. 19 No. 6 • page 9

Harvard University - Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America / BiWomenWeekly_2001_mets

The Network Seeks Volunteers

The Network for Battered Lesbians and Bisexual Women seeks community members to provide 1-4 nights shelter in their homes to lesbians, bisexual and transgender women and their children who have been battered. Training is provided, supervision, 24-hour emergency back-up and a daily stipend. Call 617-695-0877 or email nblbw@erols.com for more information.

Poetry

For You


By Peggy Fiedland

I long for a lover
Someone to hold in my arms
Lying close, their arms around me
Safe in the circle of my arms
Clinging fiercely to our love

How will I find you,
my new love?
Behind what door, around what corner?
Smiling at me
Will I know you, or will I walk by
Blind to possibilities,
Ignoring our love
Out of fear
Out of ignorance
Out of carelessness
Let me find you
Let me know you for who you are
Full of the promise of love

Review from page 7

for any sentimental, cloying reason you might think the scenario would develop into. It's so honest and poignant that many times during the story you just need to stop and take in the last sentence. Let it sit for a moment. Don't read on public transportation unless you like crying in public.

Those are just the first two stories of the collection. I won't detail each one but suffice it to say that each one feels very different from the next and very easy to walk into. Bloom is an incredible writer and observer of human behavior and her stories have a wonderful range of experience in them. As a bi reader with a lot of life experience under my belt, I felt validated and understood in her pages. Read her. 

Search & Destroy

By Abby Stevens

Day 1:

Stunned. A man from Boston in New York looking for his young son, telling his wife he loves her in a microphone.

People on the Boston streets, dazed,
empty eyes
helpless-hopeless-numbness, tears,
choking emotions

Radios crying: "Revenge! Kill their Babies who will be raised to hate us."

Day 2:

"Acts of War." Small voices cry: A call for Pacifists with Socialists' hearts.

Arab cab drivers with broken windshields. Bloodthirsty Americans wanting to kill dancing Afghans.

Day 3:

How many firefighters found alive?
Hope among rubble, lost lives and limbs.

Relating to the loss. Where to put the anger-tears-vengeance-seeking hearts and minds.

Search & Destroy thy enemy. We'll still Sleep the sleep of the just, we believe.

Day 4:

Ground zero surveyed, hijackers names, radios talk of internment camps.

Moslem children chastised in U.S.A. schools. Still the image of Afghans dancing.

Candles lit for sanity. What will tomorrow bring? I can handle the truth.

Day 7:

One week anniversary of hell
Red, White & Blue flying off shelves.

Not all Afghans hate Americans.
Soothing news as I smile at a shy girl in Moslem garb at the T stop.

She smiles sadly then turns away.

Show your VISIBILITY with buttons!!

- ◆ If God had meant for people to be bisexual there would be two sexes.
- ◆ I'm bisexual and I'm NOT attracted to you.
- ◆ Racism, Sexism, Homophobia - Recognize the Connections.
- ◆ Bisexual Pride
- ◆ VISIBILITY

\$2.00 per button (includes postage) to:

BBWN, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA 02140.

CALENDAR *continued from page 12*

Meet at the section of the restaurant that's on the corner. Nearest T is Central Square on the Red Line.

January 1 ♦ Tuesday
THERE WILL NOT BE A Bi Rap at the Women's Center.
Happy New Year, Everyone!!!!

BOSTON'S FIRST NIGHT, 7 p.m. We will begin the New Year's Eve celebration with vegetarian food at Buddha's Delight in Boston's Chinatown. From there, the group will decide what First Night festivities to partake in. Buddha's Delight is now upstairs on Beach Street between Harrison and Washington. Nearest T stop is Chinatown on the Orange Line.

January 2 ♦ Wednesday
Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. See December 5th.

January 4 ♦ Friday
New Words Live Unplugged, 7 p.m. Meghan Toohey is performing at New Words Bookstore. Call 617-876-5310 for details or visit www.newwordsbooks.com.

January 8 ♦ Tuesday
Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. See December 11th.

January 9 ♦ Wednesday
Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m. See December 12th.

January 12 ♦ Saturday
BBWN Potluck Brunch, noon. Brunch will be held at Lucy's in Belmont. Bring a dish to share, relax with a great group of women, meet some new people. Call or email Lucy for directions and to let her know you are coming, 617-484-5964 or lucylizard@yahoo.com.

January 15 ♦ Tuesday
Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Call 617-354-8807 for topic. See December 4th.
Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. See December 4th.

January 16 ♦ Wednesday
BiWomen Submissions Deadline. This issue's theme is "Spirituality." See page 2 for more ideas. Send submissions to: *BiWomen*, P.O. Box 400639, Cambridge, MA, 02140 or e-mail to nellythrustmor@aol.com.

January 19 ♦ Saturday
Biversity Brunch, 11:30 a.m. Why argue with success? Johnny D's on Holland Street in Davis Square in Somerville always draws the biggest bi brunch crowd. The Davis stop on the Red Line is just across the street.

January 20 ♦ Sunday
BBWN Bowling Brunch, noon. Meet at Lanes and

Games on Rt 2 in Cambridge. We'll bowl a few strings and then go find a place to have a late lunch. Be ready for some big laughs. Contact Ellyn if you are interested in going, 617-623-5535 or nellythrustmor@aol.com.

January 26-27 ♦ Saturday & Sunday
Fetish Fair Fleamarket. The semi-annual fetish fair will be held at the Ramada Inn in Andover, MA. Sponsored by the New England Leather Alliance. See ad on page 7 for details.

January 27 ♦ Sunday
Biversity Brunch, 1 p.m. How about an authentic Dim Sum brunch at the Golden Palace in Chinatown. Located at 14 Tyler Street. Closest T stops are South Station on the Red Line and Chinatown on the Orange Line.

Bisexual People of Color Gathering, 5-7 p.m. We're having another Sweats And Socks Get Together in JP! Wear your most comfortable sweats and your most funnest pair of sock (or, go barefoot if you like) and spend an afternoon of fun, socializing, eating, and catching up with each other or make new acquaintances. Whether you are Asian, Latino, Native American, African American, East Indian, Caribbean, biracial, of mixed heritage, a friend or ally, all diverse ethnicities and gender identities are welcome. Bring a dish or beverage to share. For information and directions contact John at 617-983-8788.

January 27 ♦ Tuesday
BiWomen mailing, 7-9 p.m. at the Bi Office at 29 Stanhope St. Can you say label, stuff, and seal? Join us on the fourth floor of the Living Center. Socialize during and after when we'll drop by Club Cafe for something to soothe you at the end of the day.

Biversity Boston is the mixed gender bisexual Network of Greater Boston.

Ongoing Events

4th Sundays: Bi People of Color Potluck. See the calendar for details.

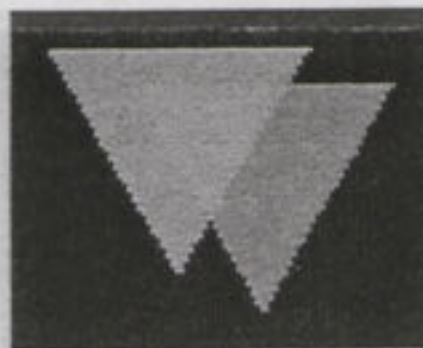
Wednesdays:
Gendertalk, 8:30-9:30 p.m. on WMBR 88.1 FM. Deals with transgender and queer issues.

Women's Club Nights

Thursdays: Dyke Night at the Midway Cafe, 3496 Washington Street in Jamaica Plain.

Saturdays: G Spot at Martin's, 137 Pearl St., downtown Boston. 9 p.m. - 2 a.m.

BiWomen wants you!!!



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The "Bi Office"

is the Bisexual Resource Center, located at 29 Stanhope Street, behind Club Cafe, right next door to Bertucci's and just down the street from the Hard Rock Cafe. For info call 617-424-9595.

Ongoing Events

1st & 3rd Tuesdays:

Bi Women's Rap. 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. For info and discussion topics call 617-354-8807.

2nd Tuesdays:

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge. Info: 617-354-8807.

1st & 3rd Thursdays:

Bi Women's Resource & Support Group. 7 p.m. at the Women's Health Consortium, 29 Vaughan Mall, Portsmouth, NH. For info call 603-431-1669 or contact Sue Corcoran at schmoo@nh.ultranet.com.

CALENDAR

December 1 ♦ Saturday

World AIDS Day. This year's theme is "I Care: Do You?" Local campuses and organizations sponsor visibility actions and events. Check out your local area for details.

Bisexual Resource Center Second Annual House Party, December 1st, 3-6 p.m. at the home of Roland and Carol Glenn, 76 West Rutland Square in Boston. All are invited. Hors d'oeuvres, wine, beer, and non-alcoholic beverages will be served. \$35 suggested contribution, RSVP to biweb@biresource.org.

December 4 ♦ Tuesday

Bi Rap at the Women's Center, 7:30-9:00 p.m. A discussion group for bisexual, bi-friendly, and questioning women. Topic: "Highways and Bi-ways: Travelling." Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., 617-354-8807.

BBWN Volunteer Serving at the Boston Living Center Ladies' Night, 5:30 p.m. Help serve the women clients at the Living Center's Ladies' Night Dinner in the second floor cafeteria. Your own meal is provided for you, too. 29 Stanhope St., Boston. Nearest T is the Back Bay Orange Line Station. Call Ellyn to volunteer, 617-623-5535.

December 5 ♦ Wednesday

Coming Out as Bisexual, 7-9 p.m. An informal support group for people who think they may be bisexual or attracted to more than one sex. A small donation is requested to help pay for the space. The

group meets at the Bisexual Resource Center at 29 Stanhope St. in Boston. Call 617-424-9595 for info.

December 7 ♦ Friday

New Words Unplugged is playing host to Alix Olson, national slam champion extraordinaire! Alix will be playing two shows at New Words Bookstore at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. Space is limited, so make your reservations now. 186 Hampshire Street, Cambridge, 617-876-5310. Nearest T is Central Square on the Red Line.

December 8 ♦ Saturday

"The Floating Dance Floor," a women's dance at the Frohsinn Club at 25 N. Quinsigamond Ave. in Shrewsbury, right off of route 9. Contact Jane at jane_elizabeth1@hotmail.com, or 508-847-7133 and she'll help organize people who'd like to attend together.

December 11 ♦ Tuesday

Married Bi Women's Discussion Group, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. Meets on the second Tuesday of each month. Call 617-354-8807 for directions.

December 12 ♦ Wednesday

Bisexual Resource Center Board Meeting, 7-9 p.m. All bi community members welcome to attend. The meeting is on the fourth floor of the Boston Living Center, 29 Stanhope St. in Back Bay.

December 13 ♦ Thursday

BBWN Skating Party at Frog Pond, 7-9 p.m. Come after work and do a little skating under the lights. Then warm up with cocoa at a local cafe. Contact Mary at Mh415@aol.com if you are interested.



December 15 ♦ Saturday

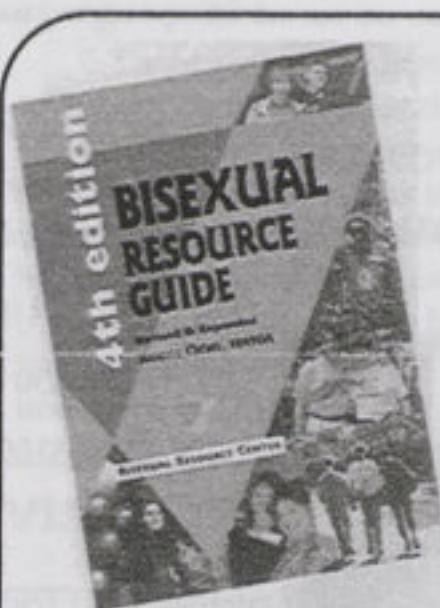
Biversity Brunch, 11:30 a.m. Brunch will be at Thornton's, 100 Peterborough Street in Boston's Fenway area. Nearest T stop is Fenway on the D branch of the Green Line.

December 18 ♦ Tuesday

Coming Out as Bisexual. 7-9 p.m. See December 5th. **Bi Rap at the Women's Center,** 7:30-9:00 p.m. Topic: "I'll Be Bi For The Holidays." See December 4th.

December 30 ♦ Sunday

Biversity Brunch, 1 p.m. Check out the great middle eastern delights at the Middle East restaurant at 472 Massachusetts Ave. in Central Square, Cambridge.



Do you have your *Bisexual Resource Guide* yet?

To order, send check or money order for \$13.95 (payable to BRC), with your name and address, to BRC, Dept. BBWN, P.O. Box 1026, Boston, MA 02117.

Or check out the BRC Web page at www.biresource.org to buy the Guide and other great bi products.

CALENDAR continues on page 11